

YANKEE DOODLE

STORIES OF THE PRESENT WAR.

Issued Semi-Monthly—By Subscription \$1.25 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York Post Office, by Frank Tousey.

No. 7.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 3, 1898.

Price 5 Cents.

"YANKEE DOODLE" WITH THE ROUGH RIDERS; —OR— Hot Work in Cuba.

BY AUTHOR OF "YANKEE DOODLE".



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CHAPTER I.

YANKEE DOODLE AND THE ROUGH RIDERS.

When Shafter's army was ready to sail from Tampa for the invasion of Cuba, Admiral Sampson sent several of his best warships to convoy the fleet of transports. On board of one of them was the famous Yankee Doodle, who stopped at Key West to see some friends and communicate with his mother in New York. He had several days of leisure time on his hands, which he spent in correspondence with friends at home and strolling about over the grounds with Joe Bailey, his fifer, recalling many incidents of their first visit to the island.

Quite a change had taken place since his first visit, for the progress of the war had made the little island a great camp.

"Joe," he said to his comrade, "we came out from New York as drummer and fifer, yet we have done less drumming than any other drummer in the whole army."

"Yes," assented Joe, "we have been making some very different kind of music."

"So we have; something that we never dreamed of while we were drumming for the regiment in New York; but I'm not kicking at it."

"Neither am I," said Joe, "for we've had no end of fun, and have seen some hot fighting."

"Yes, and there's a lot more of it ahead of us, for I want to go with Roosevelt's Rough Riders when they get here."

"The deuce you do!"

"Yes; they are just the fellows I want to get with, for they're going to do up the Spaniards in true Western cowboy style; and I'm anxious to see them do it. They are just right up to date in this bushwhacking business now going on in Cuba."

"So they are," assented Joe, "but they will find the American Indians and those Spaniards over there two very different kinds of people."

"Oh, I don't know," was the reply; "the Indian is a much better shot than the Spaniard, for he is always hard up for ammunition, which is not the case with the Spaniard."

"That's all very true," returned Joe, "but the American Indian has not got the jungles to screen him that the Spaniard has; still I am with you of course."

The two boys waited patiently for the arrival of the fleet and transports, and in the meantime amused themselves drumming and fifing for the various regiments encamped in and about Key West.

At that time the majority of the regiments there were from the West, and their drummers were like the soldiers, very crude in their knowledge of music and military tactics. Hence the skill of Yankee Doodle and Joe made them extremely popular with everybody. All the Cubans at Key West had heard so much of the exploits of Yankee Doodle over in Cuba that the bare mention of his name never failed to evoke loud vivas from them. Wherever he was to beat the drum hundreds of Cubans were on hand to cheer him. His rendition of the national airs, particularly the stirring tune of "Yankee Doodle," always set them wild.

An association of Cuban patriots presented the two boys with beautiful machetes and a brace of silver-mounted revolvers.

When the fleet hove in sight Yankee Doodle and Joe were on the lookout for it. The commandant of the convoying warships came ashore to communicate with the War Department at Washington City. Yankee Doodle and Joe met him.

"Hello, boys!" the captain exclaimed when he saw them. "I'm glad to see you. Colonel Wood, of Roosevelt's Rough Riders, is on board my ship, and is anxious to meet you."

"By George, I'm glad of that," laughed Yankee Doodle, "for Joe and I have made up our minds that we would like to go with him."

The captain laughed, saying:

"Colonel Wood asked me last night if I thought he could get you to go with him. I told him that I didn't know, but thought that he could. The colonel had heard of you, and asked me if I knew you. I told him I had a slight acquaintance with you," and all three had quite a jolly laugh.

"Can we go on board with you, captain?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Yes," was the reply; "and I'm going to return to the ship within an hour."

"All right, sir, we'll go with you. We are tired of this town."

"What's the matter with it?" the captain asked.

"Oh, it's too dull; no fun."

"Well," said the captain, "you'll have fun enough if you get with Colonel Wood's crowd, for they are a pretty rough lot."

"All right," returned Yankee Doodle, "we've been roughing it some ourselves."

The captain went on to the headquarters of the commandant of the post, while the two boys gathered up their belongings where they had been staying and repaired to the wharf, where they waited for the captain to return to his ship.

Instead of one hour, they waited there fully half a day, while orders were flying thick and fast over the wires between Key West and Washington.

It was while they were waiting at the wharf for the appearance of the captain that a boat was seen to leave the flagship to come ashore. When it reached the wharf, Yankee Doodle noticed an officer seated in it who wore a pair of glasses.

"By George, Joe!" he exclaimed, "if that isn't Teddy Roosevelt, I'm cross-eyed!"

"You're right," said Joe, "that's him; I know him; I saw him several times in New York when he was Police Commissioner."

Colonel Roosevelt heard their remarks as he left the boat and looked hard at the two boys. Seeing they wore a brown linen uniform used by the army in Cuba, he asked:

"Whose command do you belong to, boys?"

"Uncle Sam's, sir," replied Yankee Doodle, saluting him promptly.

The colonel smiled and asked:

"But what regiment?"

"Well, we left New York as drummer and fifer for the — Regiment, but we've been using rifles and machetes more than we have the drum and fife."

"Oh, you have been over in Cuba, have you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Pretty hot over there, eh?"

"You bet it is. Everything is hot over there, and the Spaniards are as hot as the sun."

The colonel was about to pass on, when Joe called after him to hold on a minute.

He stopped, turned around and faced the boys with an inquiring look.

"I want to introduce you to Yankee Doodle, Colonel," said Joe.

"Eh!" said the colonel, very much surprised. "Where is he?"

"Here he is," laughed Joe, laying his hand on Yankee Doodle's arm. "We were waiting here to go on board with the captain."

The colonel grasped Yankee Doodle's hand, shook it warmly, and then extended his hand to Joe, saying:

"I'm glad to see you, boys, for Colonel Wood and I have decided that we want you to go with us."

"Just what we wish to do, sir," said Yankee Doodle, "for we have been here five days, and are tired of it."

"Have you got permission to go?" the colonel asked.

"Yes, sir," answered Yankee Doodle; "the Board of Strategy have been kind enough to give us the widest discretion as to our movements, by the advice of Admiral Sampson and Commodore Schley."

"Good! good!" chuckled the colonel. "I suppose that accounts for the way you behaved over in Cuba."

"That's just it," was the reply, "for we were in the woods over there, where orders couldn't very well reach us."

"Well, come with me and we'll go to headquarters for a little while; we will then return on board."

The two went along with him, and met the captain of the flagship at the headquarters of the commandant of the post.

"Oh, you've met the boys?" the captain asked, as they entered the room.

"Oh, yes," he said; "and they are going with us."

"Good!" said the captain; "but don't let your rough fellows play any of their jokes on them."

"Well, I wish they'd try it," said the colonel, laughing, "for these are New York boys, and if the fellows from the West think they are greenhorns the laugh will be on them very quickly."

The commandant of the post knew Yankee Doodle and Joe, and had expressed a very high opinion of them. He related a few of their adventures to the colonel and several other officers who were present.

After an hour or so, the colonel and captain of the flagship led the way down to the wharf, accompanied by Yankee Doodle and Joe, and they were quickly rowed out to where the vessel lay at anchor. Colonel Wood was very much gratified when he found that the drummer boy and his fifer had come aboard. The boys found him an extremely pleasant man, who had spent ten or fifteen years in the regular service of Uncle Sam as a surgeon.

"I am glad to be with you, Colonel," said Yankee Doodle, "because I understand you have seen a great deal of service, which will stand you in need where you are going;" and then in answer to many questions he explained the Spanish and insurgent methods of fighting in the jungles of Cuba.

"You haven't been doing much drumming over there," said Colonel Wood.

"No, sir; it's mostly fighting, and about the meanest fighting in the world. I've been in only three battles where I had a chance to use the drum during the fight. The other fights were always in the woods—regular bushwhacking—where at times you couldn't see any of your comrades,

and was just as likely to run up against two or three Spaniards in a clump of bushes as one of your own side. It's a species of fighting that doesn't make a man feel like a soldier, but rather like a man who is out hunting for wolves."

The officers laughed, and one of them remarked that the cowboys were used to that sort of fighting.

"Maybe they are," returned Yankee Doodle, "but they will gather some new wrinkles before they get back from Cuba, or else I'm badly mistaken."

That night a drum was procured on board the ship and Yankee Doodle and Joe entertained the officers and crew with the finest martial music they had ever listened to.

Early the next morning Colonels Wood and Roosevelt, accompanied by the two boys, went on board the transport that was carrying their Rough Riders. The fleet sailed at daylight, and during the voyage Yankee Doodle and Joe did a great deal of drumming and fife playing, and mingled with the men. They had never come in contact with cowboys before, and were greatly amused at many strange characters among them. They were a jolly, reckless, daring set of men, who cared very little for human life, and hardly knew what fear was. They also found among them scores of very wealthy young men, many of them belonging to the four hundred of New York, who had joined the command for the sake of the daring adventures it promised. All of these rich fellows were strong, handsome men, who were roughing it with as much zest as were those who had spent their lives rounding up cattle on the Western plains.

On learning that Yankee Doodle and Joe had already seen several weeks of hot service in Cuba, every man who could get at them was loaded with questions, which were answered with a quiet simplicity and truthfulness. They were told that the Spanish were all poor marksmen, and were in the habit of pumping lead into the bushes with a wild recklessness, in the hope that some bullet would hit an enemy.

"And sometimes," said Yankee Doodle, "we have to do the same thing, simply because we can't see them. They have the advantage of us greatly in that they use smokeless powder, while we use the old style that raises a great cloud of smoke all about us."

"Oh, we'll just go right at 'em," said one of the cowboys; "get in on 'em with our revolvers."

"That's the way the Cubans do," explained Yankee Doodle, "with their machetes. They can go through the bushes like rabbits, and when they hit a Spaniard with the sugar-cane knives it's all up with him."

"Then they do all their fighting on foot?" asked another.

"Of course," assented Yankee Doodle, "for a man on horseback would be lifted above the bushes and exposed to the aim of the enemy. So you fellows who call yourselves Rough Riders will soon be Rough Walkers."

"Oh, we are good at walking," said a number of them.

"But how are you on standing the hot sun?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Oh, we're used to that," they sung out to him.

"Where did you get used to it?"

"Out on the plains," replied a big, burly, long-haired cowboy, "where there were no trees to give you any shade."

"You will find it very different in Cuba," he replied,

shaking his head, "for while it is the same old sun the world over, it's just a little hotter there than anywhere on the globe."

"How hot have you seen it over there?" one fellow asked.

"I've seen it hot enough to burn your hat-band off," whereat there was a loud laugh from the cowboys, and one declared that he had seen it a great deal hotter than that in Arizona.

"Why, pard," said he, squirting a half gill of tobacco juice from his mouth, "I've seen it so hot out there that I've caught boiled fish out of a lake."

"That's pretty hot," said Yankee Doodle, "but was it hot enough to bake bread to eat with the fish?"

"Why, yes; nobody ever thought of building a fire out there in the summer time to cook anything."

"Summer time!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle; "you surely don't have any winters out there, do you?"

"Yes, but they're very mild and short."

"Well, we bake bread in the open air in Cuba thirteen months in the year, and we hasn't ever let a ray of sunshine touch our cartridge belts or rifle barrels."

The crowd laughed heartily, and the man from Arizona had to admit that the Cuban sun was hotter than his.

"But can't we keep cool in the shade?" he asked.

"Only when you can find a cool place," was the reply, "and there are no cool places on the island."

"Then it must be mighty hot."

"It is not only mighty hot," said Yankee Doodle, "but the air is so close and muggy sometimes, particularly after a shower of rain, that you can't breathe it at all—you have to bite it off and chew it."

"Stop right there, you galoot!" exclaimed the cowboy; "I won't have any more of that."

"Oh, if you don't want it, I'll not give it to you," was the laughing reply.

"Well, I don't want it, and I won't have it."

"Then, don't ask for any more of it."

"I won't; I've got enough."

It was thus that Yankee Doodle demonstrated to the cowboys that he was several degrees removed from a tenderfoot. They also found out that Joe the fifer was as well up to date as Yankee Doodle.

During the day the two boys gave some martial music on the drum and fife, and the rough fellows showed by their wild cheering that they were as full of patriotism as any other man in the service.

It was a long sail from Key West along the north coast of Cuba to the extreme eastern end of the island, and thence through the Windward Passage to the south coast, where Sampson's fleet was operating against the Spaniards from Guantanamo Bay west to Santiago.

CHAPTER II.

HAIR CUTTING EXTRAORDINARY.

When the men of Sampson's fleet saw the transports in the distance, they gave way to shouts of joy, for they had

been long expected, and the strain on the marines that had been landed in Guantanamo Bay can hardly be described.

Every vessel in the fleet that was propelled by steam greeted them with prolonged whistles that echoed far and wide over land and sea. The convoying vessels and many of the transports responded in like manner. The soldiers on the transports cheered themselves hoarse, and were so eager to get off the crowded ships that they were greatly disappointed when they learned that they were not to land immediately.

It is never an easy feat to land an army from ships in the face of the enemy. It was well known that all along that coast for fifty miles the wooded hillsides were covered with Spanish riflemen, who were there to prevent, if possible, the landing of the American soldiers. The woods would have to be shelled and the Spaniards driven to cover before a single boatload of soldiers could be landed. The shelling went on for the greater part of the day, while the soldiers, packed like sardines on board the transports, were quietly looking on and waiting for orders.

It was not until the next day, and then not until twenty miles of the coast had first been thoroughly shelled for the purpose of confusing the enemy as regards the real point of landing, that it could be done. Then came the order for them to land, and immediately scores of boats filled with soldiers from the transports landed opposite a little village called Baiquiri.

There was a small inlet there, and an old iron pier formerly used by an iron ore company.

The men scrambled ashore by scores and hundreds and climbed to the crest of the high hills back of the little pier.

In a little while firing was heard from the wooded side of the hill, which had been protected from the shells of the fleet by the larger hills in front of it.

The regulars soon deployed in line of battle to protect the others landing and engage the enemy, but not one of them caught a glimpse of an enemy anywhere, yet Mauser bullets kept whistling all about them.

Suddenly a party of Cubans appeared and greeted the regulars with shouts of welcome. They were dark, swarthy fellows, half naked, gaunt and hungry, but they were brimful of fight, and at once proceeded to give the regulars a lesson in bushwhacking warfare.

They went through the bushes like rabbits, going in a crouching position, dodging about here and there, with their eyes turned toward the enemy.

Soon they were heard exchanging shots with the Spaniards. The regulars hurried up to their assistance, whereupon the Spaniards retreated, disappearing through the bushes so quickly that none of the Americans had a chance to draw a bead on them.

Two or three of the Americans were wounded and one of the Cubans killed. The regulars would have pushed on after the retreating Spaniards, had not their officers established a line which they wished to hold until a sufficient force of troops had been landed to enable them to push on further toward Santiago.

It was not until the second day after the landing of the troops began that Roosevelt's Rough Riders found them-

selves ashore and without any horses. They had been greatly disappointed at not being able to bring their horses with them from Tampa, but now they saw that horses would really be an encumbrance, as they had steep hills to climb, while practically there were no roads at all. What they called roads in that section were hardly anything more than deep gullies winding around the foot of the hills. Everywhere was a thick underbrush, and where an open space was found, a tall, thick growth of grass reaching almost to the men's shoulders held possession of them.

It was exasperating to the Americans that the smokeless powder of the enemy enabled them to keep up a murderous fire without betraying their exact locality, yet they had a contempt for the Spaniards, and did not hesitate to dash through the bushes and rout them out, never failing to hit them whenever they could draw a bead on them.

As soon as the picket line was established the different regiments formed their camps, and proceeded to make themselves as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. A great majority of the Rough Riders were inured to that kind of life, hence had but little trouble in making themselves comfortable; but thousands of volunteers who had had no experience in camp life thought it was hard lines indeed. The near proximity of the enemy, however, made it interesting enough for them to enjoy the situation without complaint.

When the Rough Riders had established their camp, Colonel Wood reported to the general that he was ready for any active service required of his men. The truth is, Colonel Roosevelt, a descendant of a long line of fighting ancestry, was eager to get into close quarters with the enemy; in fact, he was just spoiling for a fight.

Yankee Doodle was in general demand among the Rough Riders, on account of his previous experience. Scores of them had asked him and Joe to go with them, as much as guides as comrades. Two cowboys from Arizona, wiry and active, who had fought Indians for several years, had fastened onto him. One was named Jack Moreland and the other Bill Hawkins. Both were dead shots with rifle and revolver, and in a hand-to-hand fight they were equal to full-grown panthers.

The general in command of the army had forbidden any advance until it could be made in force. His main object for several days was simply to hold his footing at the landing until his artillery could be landed and placed in position on the hills.

"Say, Jack," said Yankee Doodle to the Arizona cowboy, "we're going to see campaigning now under great difficulties. There isn't probably a mile of road between here and Santiago through which a battery can be pulled, and this army has got to build a road before it can plant its batteries around the city."

"Blast such a country!" growled Jack; "it isn't worth fighting for."

"Don't you believe that," said Yankee Doodle; "it is one of the finest countries on the globe, and when Yankee capital and Yankee enterprise begin work on it there will be railroads from one end to the other, and smooth dirt roads good enough for bicycles in every direction; and as for the

soil, anything you plant in it will grow, except a dead Spaniard."

"How about a dead dog?" Jack asked.

"Plant a dead dog," replied Yankee Doodle, "and puppies will sprout by the thousand."

"Blamed rich soil that," remarked Bill, "but I don't see any of it around here."

"Oh, this is mountainous where we are now. Just wait until we get out of the hills, and you will see things that will astonish you."

A day or two later, when picket firing was heard along the hills beyond the camp, Hawkins suggested to Yankee Doodle that they go out and take a few cracks at the Spaniards.

"All right, come ahead," said Yankee Doodle, and getting permission from Colonel Wood to do so, they made their way out to the picket line and were about to go into the bushes where a lot of Cubans were pumping at the enemy, when a tall, gaunt old Cuban rushed up to Yankee Doodle, grasped his hand, crying out:

"Sancti Marie! it is Señor Yankee Doodle!"

"Pedro, old man!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "I'm glad to see you; I was afraid the Spaniards had made way with you."

"No, señor, I am alive yet, and my good machete has sent many of the hated Spaniards to their death."

Then the old fellow, seeing Joe, sung out:

"Señor Jose Bailey! I thank God that I see you alive!"

"Thank you, señor," replied Joe; "I thank him, too, that we both live. Our soldiers are now here and the Spaniards will soon leave Cuba forever."

"Si, señor, I hope they won't leave. I want them to stay until we kill them all."

"Them's my sentiments," sung out Jack Moreland; "give me your hand on that," and the cowboy rushed up to old Pedro and grasped his hand.

"Si, señor," said the old Cuban, wringing his hands with great cordiality. Then Yankee Doodle proceeded to introduce the two cowboys to his faithful old Cuban friend.

He explained how he and Pedro had campaigned together on the north coast and had many fights with the enemy, which at once made the two cowboys great friends with the old insurgent.

All the time they were talking Mauser bullets were flying recklessly about them. Presently one of them cut a lock of hair from Hawkins' head, just under the brim of his hat, and it lodged on his shoulder. He coolly picked it up and looked at it.

"That's a hint to cut your hair," laughed Yankee Doodle.

"Well," said Hawkins, "I don't like to take hints from Spaniards."

"All the same, you will get them, señor," said the old Cuban.

"That's all right," said Hawkins, throwing away the lock of hair; "I can shave closer than that with a bullet."

"Oh, you'd make a botch of it," laughed Yankee Doodle, "for if you get a chance at a Spaniard, instead of cutting his hair off, you'd make a hole in his head."

"The best shave in the world," exclaimed Pedro; and

scarcely had his voice died out, when a bullet cut a hole through the hat of Jack Moreland.

"See here, boys, let us take a hand in this. I'm tired of playing target."

"Lead the way, Pedro, where we can get a chance at them," suggested Yankee Doodle to the old Cuban.

"Si, señor; come on," and Pedro stooped until he was bent nearly double, and darted into the bushes with a speed that made the cowboys open their eyes.

"Come on," said Yankee Doodle, following close on the heels of Pedro, with Joe close behind him.

Guided by the old man, the party pressed along the crest of the hill under cover of the bushes till they had reached almost the end of the picket line. Then Pedro turned to the left and went down the hill till he struck the foot of the next declivity. Then he pushed forward in a direction that would take him to a point on the extreme left of the Spanish pickets.

"Look out, Pedro," whispered Yankee Doodle to the old Cuban; "don't get too far away from our friends behind us."

"No, señor, we will stop here and wait."

"What are you waiting for?"

"Espanolas," he replied, and just a moment later there was the roar of a dozen Mausers from a clump of bushes scarce ten paces away in front of them, one of which cut another lock from Bill Hawkins' head.

"Caramba!" fiercely hissed Pedro. "Kill them, señors!" and with that he darted through the bushes right into the midst of a party of a dozen Spaniards.

"Come quick!" said Yankee Doodle to Joe and the two cowboys, as he darted after Pedro, and in a flash they were up with him.

The old man had already cut down two, when the cowboys, with revolver in each hand, sailed in.

It was five against a dozen, but these two cowboys were dead shots with the revolver in either hand. Not another Mauser was fired, and the popping of those four revolvers was almost as rapid as a packet of Chinese firecrackers when fired in a bunch.

Joe and Yankee Doodle each got one, while old Pedro managed to get one more after the cowboys sailed in.

It is safe to say that within two minutes from the time the Spaniards fired the volley every one of them was down, only four of them alive. One of them who was wounded rose to his knees, and attempted to fire a parting shot. One of the cowboys was about to send a bullet through his head, when the swish of old Pedro's machete was heard, and the next moment the Spaniard's head rolled ten feet away down the hillside, where it lodged against a log.

"Great Scott!" gasped the cowboy, as the Spaniard fell over, "that's the cleanest shave I ever saw."

"Si, señor," said old Pedro, with a fierce grin on his swarthy face, "I shave clean;" and with that he coolly wiped his machete on the uniform of one of the dead Spaniards.

"This is good work," said Jack Moreland.

"Yes," said Yankee Doodle, "and quick work."

"Down, señors!" whispered Pedro, darting into the bushes on his left. Yankee Doodle and Joe were quick to

follow his example, while the two cowboys were but a moment behind them. They crouched and listened.

Moreland and Hawkins quickly refilled the empty chambers of their revolvers with fresh cartridges, which they had scarcely finished doing ere another party of Spaniards, in tearing through the bushes, actually stumbled over them.

"Caramba!" exclaimed one of them, trying to regain his balance.

"Diablo!" hissed Pedro, springing to his feet and bringing his terrible machete down upon the head of the Spanish soldier.

"Crack! crack!" went the revolvers of the cowboys, and instantly the little party was engaged in a hand-to-hand combat again.

The Spaniards were so utterly surprised at finding an enemy so far over on their side that they were pretty well cut to pieces before they could realize their situation. They had been shifting from one position to another, which was a habit of theirs while skirmishing, going in parties of ten or a dozen. Only one of this second party escaped alive, which he did by darting into the bushes, which so effectually concealed him from view that he succeeded in getting away.

"Hello!" said Yankee Doodle just a few minutes after the fight. "They've been after your hair again, Hawkins," and with that he picked up from the collar of his coat a lock of hair over three inches long and handed it to him. Hawkins took it in his hand, looked at it, and then felt the back of his head with the other. Then he burst into an old-fashioned horse laugh.

"Caramba!" gasped Pedro, crouching close to the ground, "you will draw another volley upon us, senor!" The others quickly followed his example, and then Yankee Doodle asked:

"Where does the laugh come in, Hawkins?"

"Why, it's simply funny how they cut hair in Cuba," he replied, and he felt his head again, chuckling all the time.

"You will have to get your hair cut, senor," remarked Pedro.

"Oh, they're cutting it fast enough for me," he returned; but he looked so comical with his hair cut so irregular by three different shots that Yankee Doodle and Joe squirmed with suppressed laughter, while the old Cuban grinned.

CHAPTER III.

THE DRUM BEAT IN CAMP—THE RIOTOUS ENTHUSIASM OF THE ROUGH RIDERS—OLD PEDRO AND THE GENERAL.

Two of the wounded Spaniards, lying where they had fallen, were uttering groans of anguish loud enough to be heard fifty paces away in the bushes. The little party of Americans could hear them further up the hill scarcely so far away.

"Caramba," hissed Pedro, "stop that noise;" but the poor fellow was in too much pain, or else he hoped that his comrades would come to the spot in sufficient force to kill or capture his assailants, so he groaned all the louder.

"Diablo!" hissed the old insurgent, springing up upon his hands and knees and darting toward the wounded Spaniard.

The next moment the swish of his machete was heard and the Spaniard ceased groaning. Not wishing to share his fate, the other wounded ones remained quiet.

Then our little party remained in the bushes for half an hour waiting for more Spaniards to appear. In the meantime the firing rolled along further away from them, until finally there were no shots nearer than a quarter of a mile.

"They are pushing the Spaniards back," said old Pedro, "but I think we have done the best work that has been done to-day."

"So do I," said Yankee Doodle. "We've got eighteen or twenty of 'em lying around here now, and none of us are hurt," and as he made that remark he looked around at Joe the fifer and saw a great red streak across his left cheek, which was greatly swollen.

"Hello, Joe!" he exclaimed, "what's the matter?"

"Oh, I've just had my face shaved," replied Joe.

"Did a bullet do that?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Hanged if I know," was the reply. "I didn't see it, but it seems as though I had been slapped in the face with a chunk of fire."

"It was a bullet," said Moreland, glancing at the swollen cheek, "and it was a red-hot one, too."

"You bet it was," said Joe.

"Well, I'm glad it is no worse," said Yankee Doodle. "I guess we had better go back now and report."

"Well, see here," said Hawkins, "there isn't a man in camp who will believe us if we go back and tell them that we killed eighteen Spaniards, which is more than three apiece for us, so let us take their rifles and cartridge belts with us."

"Si, senor, that's what we'll do," said old Pedro, who at once began gathering up the arms.

They were each pretty well loaded down as they started through the bushes. They climbed the hill to the picket line, where one of their fellows sung out to them:

"You fellows must have captured an arsenal down there."

"So we did, pard," said Hawkins. "We struck an arsenal and a barber shop."

"Barber shop?"

"Yes; don't you see I've had my hair cut; and look at the shave that Bailey got."

"That's pretty good," said one of the pickets.

"Good," sneered Hawkins. "Call that good?" and he turned around so as to show the uneven haircut he had been subjected to. "I call it a botch job. We killed every blamed barber in the shop for it and brought their whole kit away with us." With that they went down to the camp more than half a mile away, the five of them bearing the eighteen rifles they had captured, besides their own guns.

The first of the officers to see them was Colonel Wood, to whom the adventure was explained in a very few words.

"Well! well!" said the colonel, "you fellows won't leave much for the rest of us to do if you go out often."

"But look at my hair, Colonel," said Bill Hawkins.

"Oughtn't a man to be killed for giving another such a cut as this?"

"Yes," laughed the colonel, "that's the worst job I ever saw."

"That's what I say, too, sir," returned Bill, "so we cleaned out the shop."

Of course they had a thousand questions to answer, and soon Hawkins and Moreland were describing the prowess of Old Pedro in a way that touched the hearts of the Rough Riders. Both Roosevelt and Wood shook the old fellow's hand and invited him to join their command.

"Si, señor," said the old fellow, "I want to join Senor Yankee Doodle's."

"Well, he is with us."

"Then I will stay with him, señor."

"You two are old friends?" Roosevelt asked.

"Si, señor."

"Co'lonel, he saved my life twice," exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "when I was with General Gomez, and there is no truer friend or braver man in Cuba to-day," and he turned and grasped old Pedro's hand as he made this remark.

"That is the sort of man we want."

"Then you stay with me, Pedro," said Yankee Doodle.

"Si, señor, till Cuba is free," and the old fellow placed both hands on the young American's shoulders, looked him full in the face, and with a voice choked with emotion, said:

"I have nothing else to live for now. They have killed all my people."

Instantly Yankee Doodle grasped both the old man's hands, saying:

"Amigo, we will avenge every one."

"Si, señor, I want nothing else but vengeance and the freedom of Cuba, and will take no more prisoners. This day I have slain five. Your people may say that we are savages; it may be true, but the Spaniard is the most savage of all men, and if I ever spare the life of one, may the souls of my beloved disown me in the next world. Señor, where is your drum?"

"I don't know where it is, Pedro, but there are plenty of them here in camp. Why do you ask?"

"I want to hear you beat the charge again."

"Colonel," Yankee Doodle asked, wheeling quickly and facing Colonel Roosevelt, "may I beat the charge for this brave old man?"

"Certainly, certainly," replied the colonel, who instantly despatched one of the men for a drum.

In ten minutes it was brought and Yankee Doodle immediately swung it and seized the sticks.

"Get your fife, Joe," said he, looking over at young Bailey.

There were some two or three hundred men around them at the time, who had come to look at the captured Mausers and hear the story of the fight.

"Now, Colonel," said Yankee Doodle, "this charge is a tune of my own. It represents a regiment in battle and the final charge, a hand-to-hand conflict. I led a thousand men with it in the charge at Calvareo, who went over the breastworks like so many tigers, after having been twice repulsed.

With that explanation he began beating the notes of a marching regiment, in which the tramp of a host of men was easily recognized.

Suddenly there rolled out from the drum and in the shrill notes of the fife volley after volley of rifle shots, so clear and distinct that even single shots could be distinguished. That was kept up for a couple of minutes, interspersed with discharges of artillery.

Suddenly Yankee Doodle yelled out fiercely:

"Charge!" and instantly the drum imitated the rush of an armed host in battle, interspersed with fierce exclamations of the combatants, followed by the ringing clank of steel against steel, in which fierce growls of men in deadly conflict could be plainly distinguished.

Officers and men alike were so stirred by the sounds of the conflict that they clutched their weapons, while their faces wore the grim expression of men in deadly combat.

Old Pedro was wrought up to such a pitch that his machete flashed in the air above his head, and a fierce yell of "Death to Spain!" burst from his lips.

Instantly every Rough Rider within the sound of his voice took up the cry, following it with

"Cuba Libre!"

Some ten feet to the left from where Pedro stood was a young magnolia tree, about the size of a man's arm. The fierce old Cuban, wrought up to a pitch of irresistible excitement, dashed toward the magnolia, and with a single blow of his heavy machete, cut it square in two about four feet from the ground, yelling at the same time:

"Cuba Libre! Death to Spain!"

Scarcely had the bush fallen to the ground when fife and drum broke forth at the stirring notes of Yankee Doodle.

Then the Rough Riders went wild. Fully five hundred of them drew their revolvers and fired in the air, yelling at the same time like so many Indians.

The shots threw the camp into tremendous excitement for it was believed that a sudden attack had been made by the enemy.

The long roll was beaten in every regiment in the camp, and thousands of soldiers seized their rifles and fell into line. Officers dashed here and there, expecting every moment to be involved in a terrific combat with the Spaniards.

In the meantime Colonels Wood and Roosevelt were yelling fiercely at the Rough Riders to cease firing.

A half dozen generals dashed up, and on learning the occasion of the excitement were mad enough to court-martial the whole crowd.

But the maddest officers were Wood and Roosevelt, as it drew upon them the laugh of the whole army. But when it was all over with, they laughed as heartily as any of the others.

The excitement had the effect of making Yankee Doodle and his famous drum charge known to all the officers and soldiers, and that evening he and Joe were sent for by General Shafter to come to his headquarters and beat it for him.

When he heard it, he declared that it was calculated to make men charge into the very jaws of death, and render them invincible in an assault.

It was then that Shafter heard the story of the fight in

the bush, where five men slew eighteen Spaniards in a hand-to-hand combat. He talked with old Pedro, and during the conversation remarked that the Americans were there to conduct the war according to the rules of civilized nations.

"Senor General," said the grim old Cuban, "I am not civilized, and do not wish to be until Cuba is free."

"What's that?" the general asked.

"I say that I am not civilized, and do not wish to be until Cuba is free."

"What do you mean by that?" the general asked.

"I mean that during this war I am a savage, and will spare the life of no Spaniard in battle."

"But, if a Spaniard throws down his arms, what then?"

"He will throw down his life, too, Senor General, if I can reach him."

"What! You won't accept his surrender?"

"No, General; I take no prisoners."

"Then you are indeed a savage."

"Si, señor, so I am; but Spain has made me so."

"Do you kill the wounded?"

"No, General; if he is wounded by some other hand than my own I never touch him, unless he continues to fight."

"But how about your own wounded?"

"When I fight a Spaniard, Senor General, I fight him to the death, for either he or I must die. One good blow from my machete is generally enough. You will find none of my wounded behind me."

"What! Do you strike a man when he is down?"

"No, General, when he falls under one of my blows, he is generally dead by the time he strikes the ground."

The general laughed in spite of himself, after which he asked if all Cubans were like him.

"Only those who have suffered as I have," was the reply, and then he told the general a story that made the blood fairly tingle in his veins.

"I can hardly blame you, my friend," said the officer, when the old Cuban had finished; "but I'm sorry that such a state of affairs exists in Cuba."

"So am I, Senor General, and I'm trying to make Spain sorry, too."

"She will be sorry enough," remarked the general, "before we get through with her."

The entire staff heard the interview, and also stories of the prowess in battle of the grim old Cuban, until many of them looked upon him with awe.

He returned to the camp of the Rough Riders, and rolling himself in his blanket within a few feet of where Yankee Doodle and Joe were lying, slept as peacefully as an infant until sunrise. He seemed to have a fatherly affection for the two boys, which he never failed to evince on all occasions. He insisted on cooking the meals for them and sharing it with them, and at all times was ready to perform any service for them that was within his power to do.

During the day Colonel Wood consulted with Yankee Doodle about the road leading toward Santiago over the hill beyond the one where they had the last skirmish with the enemy.

"You'd better ask Pedro about that, Colonel," said Yan-

kee Doodle, "he knows as much about it as any rabbit in the woods," and the old Cuban was immediately called in and questioned.

With the end of his machete he drew a rough map of the road on the ground and explained to him the different places where he thought the Spaniards would be most likely to attempt an ambush.

"That's just what I want to find out," said the colonel.

"Si, Senor Colonel, for they are bad things, but it is a game we will have to play in Cuba."

"You will go with us, will you not?" the colonel asked.

"I will go with Senor Yankee Doodle," was the reply.

"Yes, yes, of course. He is going with us."

"Then I'll go, too, Senor Colonel; but you should let the Cubans uncover the Spaniards in the bushes ahead of you, for the Spaniards, though foolish, are very brave and will fight to the death."

"That is also true of my men," said the colonel.

"Si, Senor Colonel, but it is a pity they should be killed by Spaniards."

"Quite right," assented the colonel; "it is a pity that anybody should be killed, but it is the fortune of war that men should fall in battle."

CHAPTER IV.

THE BATTLE OF LA QUASINA AND HOW IT WAS WON BY THE ROUGH RIDERS.

The next day after the disturbance in the camp by the cowboys, Hawkins turned up with his hair cut short, having found a volunteer with a pair of scissors, who trimmed it for him. Many of his comrades who wore their hair long expressed surprise at his having done so.

"See here, boys," he said to them, "rounding up cattle on the plains, where there are no trees, is very different from rounding up Spaniards in the woods. Long hair is all right in the West, but my experience of yesterday tells me that it is all wrong in Cuba."

But the cowboys laughed, one of whom said:

"See here, Bill, when I was a kid I read a story one day about a fox whose tail was cut off by a steel trap, and when the other foxes laughed at him, he said that tails were no good anyway and were a useless encumbrance; that it was much cooler without one, and they could run faster through the bushes, but another old fox who had been carrying a tail a long time remarked that it was a little strange that no fox had ever thought of that until he had lost his own tail."

"Oh, yes," said Bill, "I read that story, too. It was written by an old Greek some two or three thousand years ago, who made it up to amuse little boys. It isn't history at all, because we know foxes can't talk. But I recollect reading another story that is history, and good scripture, too. It is about David, the chap who killed Goliath with a sling."

"What is it?" a score of cowboys asked. "Tell us about it."

"Well, it is this way, as well as I can recollect: That fellow, David, after he killed Goliath, was made king, and he married a whole lot of wives and had a big house full of kids. Some of his boys got pretty wild, and one of 'em named Absalom went to be a cowboy, and he was a hustler, too. He let his hair grow long until it hung away down on his shoulders. He was so good at rounding up cattle and fighting Phillistines—they might have been Spaniards for all I know, for it's a mighty long time since I read it—that he became very popular with the boys. They were afraid that when the old man died some other one of his sons would be king, while they wanted Absalom, so they got together and raised a big army, swearing that they'd have a cowboy for king or know the reason why. Of course the old man couldn't stand that, so he sent his army of regulars to thrash the cowboys and bring Absalom home. The cowboys were mighty good fighters, but they couldn't stand up against the old man's regulars, and so they got licked and had to skip. Absalom was a good rider and had a fast horse, but he was in a wooded country like Cuba, had to dash through the woods to keep the old man's regulars from catching him, and, would you believe it, boys, as he was dashing through the timber that long hair of his became entangled in the limbs of a tree and it yanked him out of the saddle, while his horse went on as fast as the wind. There he was, hanging by the hair when some of the officers of the regulars came up and shot him full of arrows. After he was dead they cut him down and took him to the old man, who raised merry and particular Cain because they had killed him. So you see what long hair is worth to a man in the woods, and as it is both history and scripture, you'd better put it in your pipes and smoke it along with your fox's tail story."

The story was a clincher and created a good deal of laughter. Yankee Doodle was so tickled over it that he repeated it to Colonels Wood and Roosevelt, and soon they were laughing over it even at the general's headquarters.

"That's a good one," said Colonel Wood, "and ought to make every cowboy have his hair cut."

Early the next morning, after Colonel Wood's interview with old Pedro, the Rough Riders started out over the hills to feel their way toward Santiago. Yankee Doodle, Joe Bailey and the two cowboys, together with a company of Cubans, went on in advance. There was no little dissatisfaction among the Rough Riders because they were not permitted to go in advance themselves. They were spoiling for a fight, and each man wanted to be the first in it.

After they had advanced a couple of miles, they divided into two parties and passed around opposite sides of a high wooded hill, one led by Colonel Wood and the other by Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt.

As they were advancing along the foot of the hill, the Cubans suddenly made the discovery that the wooded height was covered with Spanish soldiers. They hurried back to stop the advance of the Rough Riders. They reported it to the colonel, and of course through the others of the party all the cowboys got hold of it.

They knew it was an ambush, but what cared they for that? They were spoiling for a fight and bound to have it. It would probably have been impossible to hold them back

after they learned that the Spaniards were right in their front, so they went on, and in a few minutes bullets from a thousand Mausers were whistling through the bushes all around them.

Yet not a single Spaniard could be seen, while the smokeless powder they used gave but little idea of their exact locality.

Many of them fell, killed or wounded, but the Rough Riders never faltered a moment. They persistently pushed forward, and Yankee Doodle and his little party led the way, even when their judgment urged them to go back.

Colonel Roosevelt, himself on foot, with rifle in hand, advanced with the very foremost. Moreland and Hawkins kept alongside of Pedro, Yankee Doodle and Joe, peering here and there through the bushes, trying to get a glimpse of the enemy. They were not men who wasted ammunition by firing into thickets, for they had been in the habit of shooting at something and hitting it.

Suddenly they dashed into a party of nearly fifty Spaniards, who had been firing as fast as they could in the direction the Americans were coming.

Instantly the old Cuban, finding himself within arm's length of a Spaniard, uttered a fierce yell of "Cuba Libre!" and began laying about him with his machete.

Hawkins and Moreland, with Yankee Doodle and Joe, opened on them with their revolvers, one in each hand. The rapidity with which the cowboys could fire a revolver was truly marvelous.

Spaniards fell all around them, for they used only their Mausers, while the revolvers could fire three shots to their one.

Still, it would have been all up with Yankee Doodle and his four companions had not Pedro's yell of "Cuba Libre" brought other Cubans to his side almost instantly.

Then the Rough Riders came up, and the old cowboy yell that had so often sent terror into the hearts of the Apaches of the West resounded far over the hills.

Of course the Spaniards had to retreat. As they did so, the Rough Riders hung on to their rear so close, pouring in volley after volley from their deadly revolvers, that they broke and fled in a panic.

On the other side of the hill Colonel Wood was pushing the enemy before him through the bushes. The Spaniards sought refuge in an old deserted distillery, which was built of stone and brick, from the doors and windows of which they poured a hot fire upon the advancing Americans.

"Men!" sung out the colonel, "they're in that house there; let's get inside and mix up with them!"

With a yell the cowboys charged the old building, and the Spaniards, utterly astounded at the audacity of the thing, suddenly received the impression that a very large force must be close behind them. They could not conceive it possible that a small force would advance so recklessly on such a strong position, hence they went through the doors and windows on the other side and retreated in great disorder clear beyond the range of the American rifles.

Colonels Wood and Roosevelt met and shook hands near the old building, congratulating each other on the splendid courage and fighting qualities of the men.

During the advance old Pedro and his party ran into a

party of the enemy in a clump of bushes, who at once threw down their arms and cried for quarter.

Yankee Doodle, Joe and the two cowboys promptly granted it, but Pedro cut down three of them with his machete before they could stop him.

"Caramba!" he exclaimed. "Death to Spaniards!"

"But they have surrendered," said Yankee Doodle.

"I take no prisoners, senor," said the old man.

"But it is the order of the general."

"I won't obey such an order. I will kill!"

The two cowboys led the five Spanish prisoners back a few paces in the direction of the Rough Riders, who were coming up on the rear. The sight of them so frightened the Spaniards they broke away to escape in the direction their comrades had gone. As they did so they ran up against Pedro, Yankee Doodle and Joe.

Quick as a flash the old Cuban wheeled on them with his machete, cutting down two of them before Hawkins and Moreland could interfere.

Moreland caught him around the waist, while Hawkins tried to wrench his machete from his hand. Of course, he resisted, and a desperate scuffle ensued, during which the remaining three Spaniards made a second dash for liberty. But for a party of Rough Riders who caught sight of them they would probably have escaped. As it was, they were shot down.

It so happened that Pedro saw them when they fell. He ceased to struggle with the cowboys, exclaiming with intense satisfaction:

"Sancti Marie! They are dead!"

Moreland and Hawkins let go of him, and he picked up his machete, which had fallen to the ground during the struggle, remarking as he did so:

"Senor Americano, you call it civilization to spare the enemy in the day of battle. It is the worst kind of foolishness, at which the enemy himself laughs."

"You're right, pard," said Moreland, "but the best soldier is he who obeys orders; and the order is that when the enemy surrenders you must not strike him."

The firing continued. The fierce old Cuban ceased talking and again darted forward to take part in the fight and the others followed him. A few minutes later the Rough Riders were complete masters of the field, from which the enemy had been driven.

The fight that day is now known as the battle of La Quasina, near the village of Sevilla. Nearly twenty of the Rough Riders were found dead in the bushes, while some fifty or sixty were wounded, a much greater loss than was at first suspected. The loss to the enemy, however, was three times as great, as nearly sixty dead Spaniards were found and as many so badly wounded they could not get away. It is a well-known fact that the Spaniard, like the American Indian, takes away with him every wounded man who is able to stand on his feet, walk or run.

When Yankee Doodle joined Colonel Wood, near the old deserted brewery, the latter grasped his hand and said:

"I find that you were right, for the enemy was in force exactly at the places you and the old Cuban said they would be."

"Yes, Colonel," he replied, "I have learned to rely on the

judgment of the insurgents who have been fighting the Spaniards so long. I had never been over this hill, but when old Pedro told me about it, and said that the Spaniards would try to ambush us here, I believed him."

"It has cost us dearly," remarked the colonel, "but the moral effect of the victory is worth all it cost, for it has taught the Spaniards that we are here to fight, and that when we fight we mean to win."

At that moment some of the cowboys came up with several prisoners. The colonel could speak Spanish quite well and at once began questioning them.

One of the prisoners said that the men and officers of his command were astounded at the Americanos charging on them after the first volley.

"We expected them to retreat when they found that we were in ambush there, but instead of doing so they came right on, so we thought the whole American army was coming."

"But you can't hold this position," added the prisoner.

"Why not?" he was asked.

"You will soon find out," he answered.

Old Pedro, who was standing close by, beckoned to Yankee Doodle to follow him, and they walked away from the group.

"What is it, Pedro?" Yankee Doodle asked him.

"I fear there is a Spanish force on our left, senor, behind that range of hills out there," and he pointed as he spoke to a range of hills some two miles away.

"Why do you think so, Pedro?"

"Because there is a road from Santiago going around that way. There is a village over there, and another road leading from that toward the coast. It may be that the Spaniards stationed here on this hill were instructed to hold it and keep us engaged until they could sweep around behind us from that village and cut us off from the main army."

"By George, old man," said Yankee Doodle, "the colonel must know that," and he hastened at once to inform Colonel Wood what the old man had told him.

The colonel looked in the direction indicated and mentally calculated that such a movement would be quite too daring for the Spaniards to undertake.

"Let me go around there and see?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Go ahead," was the reply, "but be careful."

"Can I have a few men?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Yes, if they will volunteer to go with you."

Yankee Doodle turned and went among the cowboys, saying he wanted twenty men to go with him to a little village a couple of miles away to see if there were any Spaniards there. Every one he spoke to wanted to go, and instead of twenty, thirty slipped away with him, not an officer among them.

Joe, Hawkins and Moreland went with them, and in a few minutes they were out of sight of the force of Rough Riders there by the old brewery.

When they reached the bottom of the hill, they found about twenty Cuban scouts, who had been doing service down between the hills for the purpose of giving notice of the approach of any Spaniards in that direction.

CHAPTER V.

"WHAT ARE YOU GIVING ME?" THE COLONEL ASKED.

Guided by old Pedro, the party moved around to the east side of the hill, and there struck the little road that he had spoken about to Yankee Doodle, which led in the direction of the village, a mile away.

The old Cuban was extremely cautious as he advanced, as he saw evidences of a recent occupation by the Spaniards. He cautioned the others to keep very quiet lest they be overheard by the lurking enemy.

Necessarily the advance was rather slow, as the wily old Cuban had no relish for an ambush prepared by the enemy. As they approached the little village the few scattering houses on the outskirts seemed to be entirely deserted. He called Yankee Doodle's attention to that fact, saying:

"Senor, that means that a fight was expected here."

"Yes," said Yankee Doodle, "it does look that way; but don't you think there are people in some of those houses?"

"No, senor; there would be no safety for them. Bullets can go through them as easily as through the leaves of those bushes."

By and by one of the Cubans saw a man, evidently one of the villagers, running away from the rear of one of the huts and called to him to halt. But the fellow ran all the faster, whereupon Pedro raised his rifle, aimed and fired at him.

The man was some two hundred yards away, and, of course, he missed him.

"What are you shooting at him for?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"He is a spy, senor."

"How do you know he is?"

"Why, if he was a friend of Cuba he wouldn't run away from us."

"Do you want him?" Hawkins asked.

"Si, senor; but don't kill him."

Hawkins raised his rifle, aimed and fired quickly; the fellow stopped and went limping away to the cover of a clump of bushes.

A half dozen Cubans dashed forward to catch him. They found him lying on the ground under the bushes, groaning.

"What did you run away for?" Pedro asked him as they came up.

"I was afraid, senor."

"What were you afraid of?"

"The soldiers," he replied.

"But you were running toward the Spanish soldiers."

"There are no Spanish soldiers here."

"When did they leave?"

"This morning, senor."

"Where did they go?"

"To the city."

"Caramba!" exclaimed the old man; "why do you lie to us?"

"I am not lying, senor."

"Diablos! that's another," and the old man raised his machete threateningly.

The wounded man closed his eyes, as though expecting that moment to be his last on earth.

"Hold on, Pedro," said Yankee Doodle. "The fellow may be telling the truth."

"No, senor; he is lying."

"Well, if he is, we can soon find it out. Give him a chance for his life. We will wait here until a couple of the men go forward."

"There's no use of sending anybody forward, senor," said Pedro, shaking his head, "for a quarter of a mile up the road there is an old stone wall, built of stones taken from an old quarry that once supplied building material for Santiago; the Spaniards are behind that waiting for us."

"How do you know they are?"

"Because that's the way they do, senor; I know their habits, just as a farmer knows the habits of his hogs and his cattle; and this fellow was sent out to give notice of our coming."

"Is there no way to get around it?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Si, senor, if the Spaniards themselves don't see us or know we are here."

"Then, let's go around that way," suggested Yankee Doodle.

"Si, senor, we will go. Come on," and he started back down the road along the way they had just come, with the entire party following close behind them.

When they had gone about fifty yards he turned squarely into the bushes on his left and began the ascent of the hill, which at that point was covered with a dense thicket.

When they had gone up nearly one hundred yards they were at a sufficient height to see the whole village.

"Now, senor," said he, pointing to where the road ran along the foot of the hill, up nearer the village, "that stone wall runs along on this side of the road, and the Spaniards are crouching down behind it there waiting for us."

"You seem to be quite certain of it," said Yankee Doodle.

"Si, senor, I know them; and when we creep along that way," pointing along the hillside in front of him, "you will see across the old quarry and have a good view of them."

"Will we be close enough to fire on them?"

"Si, senor, if they stay there."

Yankee Doodle was silent for a moment; then he thought of the wounded man left lying in the bushes by the roadside.

"By George!" he said, "we made a mistake in leaving that man out there by the roadside. He may get word to them of our presence here."

"No danger of that, senor," replied the old man with a grim smile on his face.

"Why not? Do you think he won't do it?"

"He can't do it, senor; he's dead."

"The deuce he is?"

"I sent a man back to him, senor," quietly remarked the old man, and Yankee Doodle actually shuddered at the revelation of the savage nature of the old insurgent.

"Lead on," he said, and the old fellow, telling the men to follow right in his tracks, led off along the brow of the

hill, until they came to a place where they could see the old quarry below them, quite a deep excavation, covering a couple of acres of ground.

"There they are, señor," whispered the old man, pointing beyond the quarry to a low stone wall, between three and four feet in height.

For a distance of nearly two hundred yards could be seen the brown uniforms of Spanish soldiers as they lay upon the ground close up against the wall. There must have been a couple of hundred of them.

When the Rough Riders realized that they were in sight of the enemy, and that, too, within good range, they insisted upon a fight.

"Now, see here," said Yankee Doodle, turning to Hawkins and Moreland, "they are two hundred yards away, and the average Cuban can't hit a horse at that distance, so you must understand that if we pick a fight with them here, you've got to do the killing yourselves."

"That's all right, my boy," said Moreland, "there are thirty-four of us here who can hit the bull's-eye every time at that distance. We can each get a man as he lies on the ground, and we can get one or two more before they can get away from there, unless they get over on the other side of that wall faster than jack rabbits."

"All right, then," said Yankee Doodle; "let every man get a place where he can make sure of his aim, and wait for the signal to fire."

"What's the signal, pard?"

"A single shot, and I will fire it within five minutes."

The men quietly dispersed for a distance of one hundred feet along the side of the hill, while Yankee Doodle very coolly picked out a Spaniard who was sitting flat on the ground, leaning against the wall.

"I'll give that fellow a bit of lead in the stomach," he said to himself, raising his rifle and taking deliberate aim.

A sharp crack rang out on the still air, and the man he aimed at was seen to double over, with both hands on his stomach.

About twenty seconds passed, and then the rifles of the Rough Riders blazed along the hillside. The Spaniards lying behind the wall sprang up, rifles in hand.

Then every Rough Rider began pumping his lead at the rate of about eight or ten shots a minute, and the astonished Spaniards were seen to drop here and there all along the line.

They looked up at the hillside at the clouds of white powder smoke rising up from the bushes, and realized, when too late, that instead of being the trappers, they were themselves the trapped.

They fired a scattering volley and then went over the wall with astonishing speed. The roadbed being considerably below the level of the ground along the base of the stone wall, the Spaniards were unable to use it as a breastworks, because it was too high for them to fire over it, but it effectually protected them from any further damage from the fire of the Rough Riders.

"There they go!" said Pedro, pointing to a few rifle muzzles borne by the Spaniards as they ran at full speed along the road toward the village.

"Boys!" sung out Bill Hawkins, "this is the neatest job I ever had a hand in, for there must be at least fifty of them lying out there under that wall."

"Right you are, pard," replied one of the cowboys. "They must have thought that the devil himself was up here."

"Let's go down there," said Yankee Doodle, "and he started down the hill, followed by the others.

When they reached the wall they found between fifty and sixty Spaniards, nearly half of them dead. The wounded men seemed to be utterly astounded at seeing them come down from the hills, when they had expected them to walk into the trap set for them.

Many of the cowboys, from having seen long service on the plains along the borders of Mexico, were very familiar with the Spanish language. They talked freely with the wounded men, and thus learned that there was a considerable body of Spanish troops at the other end of the village, holding the main road to Santiago.

On learning that, Yankee Doodle instantly sent half a dozen Cubans to watch them. They went creeping and dodging along behind the houses, while Yankee Doodle and the others remained behind the wall until they could hear from them.

In less than twenty minutes the rush of a considerable body of horsemen was heard, and soon a squadron of Spanish cavalry was seen dashing up as if to rescue their wounded. They never dreamed that the Americans themselves had come down and taken possession of the wall, and the first intimation that they had that such was the case was a destructive volley from the Rough Riders and Cubans at close range.

More than a score were knocked out of their saddles, which caused the entire squadron to recoil and attempt to retreat. But behind them was an entire regiment of infantry, which completely blocked the road and prevented the retreat of the cavalry.

"Now we've got 'em, boys!" said Yankee Doodle; "keep cool, and let 'em have it!"

"You bet!" burst from the cowboys, who, protected by the stone wall, began a merciless massacre of men and horses in the road.

The infantry could not deploy, and so those who fired had to fire over the backs of the horses, which caused their bullets to pepper the tops of the hills behind the Rough Riders.

Not a moment did the firing cease from behind that wall, and so great was the execution that the Spanish officers grew frantic in their efforts to move the regiment back. It was finally done, but ere they were out of range many of the Rough Riders had fired the last cartridge in their belts.

"Don't use your revolvers, boys!" sung out Yankee Doodle; "just swing your rifles on your backs and use the Mausers lying on the ground here."

"Good for you, pard!" sung out the Rough Riders, each of whom gathered up a Spanish Mauser rifle and took the belts from around the dead, with which they continued to pepper the enemy as long as they were within range.

"Now, boys," sung out Yankee Doodle, "we must get

away from here; there are only about fifty of us, while there are probably a couple of thousand Spaniards out there. Let every man spring over the wall, make a break for camp, and lose no time about it," and with that he leaped over the wall, followed by Joe Bailey and old Pedro.

"Hold on!" sung out Moreland; "why not get some horses?"

"You can't get more than a dozen or so," returned Yankee Doodle, "and they might cost us as many lives. Come ahead, now, and let's not spoil our victory."

With that Yankee Doodle led off in a brisk run down the road, with every man following. They ran at least half a mile before stopping; they were then panting like dogs who had been chasing deer.

"Hold up now, boys," called out Yankee Doodle; "we can take it easy now, for those fellows won't dare follow for fear of being ambushed." And he was right.

After waiting there for some ten or fifteen minutes to recover their wind, Yankee Doodle ordered a half dozen of the Cubans to conceal themselves in the bushes along the hillside to watch the enemy and send word back to camp if they attempted a movement in that direction.

Then he resumed the march in the direction of the camp, each man bearing a captured Mauser and cartridge belt as a prize won in the fight.

When they arrived at the old brewery building which Colonel Wood and the Rough Riders were holding, Colonel Roosevelt went forward to meet them, eager to learn about the firing which they had heard.

On seeing the extra Mauser rifles they had with them, he asked:

"Where did you get them, boys?"

"At the picnic," Yankee Doodle replied.

"Picnic, eh? I heard firing; was that the music you had?"

"Yes," was the reply. "I never had so much fun in my life. Every Mauser we've got here we wrenched out of the hands of dead Spaniards."

"What are you giving me?" the colonel asked.

"The straight truth, Colonel; and here are fifty men or more who will swear that we left a hundred rifles more on the ground, because it is too blamed hot to bring them away."

The colonel laughed, saying that he didn't wish to hear men swear to a yarn like that.

"All right," said Yankee Doodle, "then I suppose you think we stole these guns?"

"Oh, no, not so bad as that. I'll give you credit for the guns you brought in; but, for heaven's sake, don't talk about leaving any more behind you."

CHAPTER VI.

SHAFTER SENDS YANKEE DOODLE ON A DANGEROUS MISSION.

So great was the excitement over the report brought by Yankee Doodle and his party that Colonel Wood resolved

to send a detachment of five hundred of the Rough Riders to investigate the presence of the enemy in that locality, and Captain Capron led the advance.

Yankee Doodle's party returned with them as guides, as well as to point out the different phases of the fight to their comrades.

It took them less than two hours to reach the village, where they learned that the entire Spanish force had retired to Santiago, fearing an attack in force by the Americans. As soon as the officer in command was satisfied that the Spaniards had retreated he proceeded to investigate the scene of the fight.

While the Spaniards carried away most of their wounded, they did not wait to bury their dead, nearly one hundred of whom were found lying where they had fallen.

"Now, you see," said Yankee Doodle, "generally there are about two wounded to every dead man on the battlefield, so you can figure for yourself the fun that we had here."

"It must have been glorious fun, my boy," said the officer, "since you didn't lose a man yourself."

"That's the way to fight," laughed Yankee Doodle. "The best generalship is that which inflicts the greatest loss upon the enemy with the least cost. But I must give credit to Pedro for piloting the way to make victory possible."

"It was a wonderful fight," remarked the American officer.

"So it was," assented Yankee Doodle; "and if I had had about five hundred of the Rough Riders with me I would have attempted the capture of the whole Spanish force."

"Do you think you could have accomplished it?"

"Well, I don't know; but I would have tried with such a backing as that. At any rate I would have attempted it."

It was learned from the villagers that the Spaniards had been there two days, apparently waiting in great expectancy, and the American officer suspected that a great scheme for the ambushing of a considerable body of the American troops had been planned; but the attack by a handful of men under Yankee Doodle had frustrated their plans.

After spending an hour there, the Rough Riders returned to camp, which they reached just as the stars were coming out. Tired and dusty they lay down on the hillside facing the sea to cool off in the breeze that came from the water.

When the news reached General Shafter of what had occurred, he sent for Colonel Wood, who, suspecting what was wanted, took Yankee Doodle along with him and reported at headquarters.

On the general's asking him about the fight, the colonel referred him to Yankee Doodle for the particulars, who explained the whole thing in as few words as possible, and so clearly that nothing was misunderstood.

"Young man," said the general, "that was a brilliant affair. You have the making of a good soldier. I doubt if the war will show another fight like it, as you killed an'

wounded at least three times as many men as your own force without losing a man yourself."

"Yes, General," he replied, "I find that it is a great deal better to use strategy sometimes than bullets."

"Quite right; my boy," returned the general; "it is strategy that often makes bullets most effective."

"Yes, I found that out; and once, when I was with General Gomez, he let me have a body of three hundred Cubans, and with that number I managed to frighten a Spanish garrison of five hundred men into surrender."

"I hadn't heard of that," said the general, evidently very much astonished. "When did that happen?"

"Over a month ago, and in this province, too. When you see General Garcia, ask him about it, for he was in command at Bayamo at the time and sent reinforcements to the place to secure the supplies that fell into our hands."

"Well, see here, young man, you are a drummer boy, I believe?"

"Yes, General."

"And nearly raised a riot in camp the other night with your drum beating?"

"Oh, that was the cowboys, General," he laughed. "I don't claim any credit for that."

"Well, if I can bring it about," remarked the general, "you shall have a regiment before this war ends, for evidently you know something about how to manage men."

"I don't know that I do, General; but when I have anything to do with a fight, I try to see how we can win with the least cost to our side."

"That's the highest type of good generalship, let me tell you. Where is that man Pedro who was with you—that Cuban?"

"He is in camp here with us."

"Do you manage to control him in battle?"

"I don't try to, General. I merely turn him loose and count his dead after the fight is over."

"You don't count his prisoners, do you?"

"Oh, no; he doesn't bother himself with prisoners; nor does he bother the prisoners of other soldiers. He simply won't take any himself. If I could get a regiment of such men I'd be inside of Santiago within forty-eight hours."

The general laughed heartily and confessed that he believed he would be foolish enough to try it.

"I know the men, General," said Yankee Doodle, "and would not be afraid to enter into any desperate enterprise with them."

The general then instructed him to report to him early the next morning for duty, as he had a special mission upon which he wished to send him. Yankee Doodle saluted and retired with Colonel Wood, who remarked to him on the way back to his quarters that he had made a friend of the general, in which he was exceedingly fortunate.

"For he will give you a chance unquestionably to distinguish yourself," he added.

"And probably be 'extinguished,'" returned Yankee Doodle.

"Oh, you'll have to take your chances on that," laughed the colonel.

"Yes, I know that; and the chances are many."

"Not in your case, for you were born lucky; and yet I think you take more chances than anybody I ever saw."

When he returned to his quarters Yankee Doodle had obtained permission from the colonel that if he needed any company on his mission the next day he might be permitted to take Moreland and Hawkins with him.

"They are the best men I ever met," he remarked, "for they don't lose their heads even in the hottest fight, and they hit whatever they shoot at."

"Oh, we've got hundreds of just such men in the Rough Riders," said the colonel.

"Maybe you have, sir, but those are the two that I want."

That night he said nothing to any one about his interview with the general, and next morning reported alone at headquarters ready for whatever service might be required of him. The general took him into his tent, where they remained together undisturbed for a half hour.

"What I want you to do," the general said to him, "is to take such Cubans with you whom you think we can rely upon, go around the city of Santiago, and see for yourself what the defences are. I want to get accurate information as to the character of the defences and the location of their most formidable batteries. At the same time I do not wish you to enter the city, because in the event of capture you'd be dealt with as a spy. You can probably find Cubans near the city who already know the things that you are trying to find out, but I don't wish to rely upon statements from men who I do not know, unless they are to some extent corroborated. Do you understand now what I am after?"

"I think I do, General, and will do my best to get the information for you."

"Very well, then, make up your party and be off at once."

Yankee Doodle saluted and left him, and a few minutes later met Hawkins, to whom he said:

"I'm going out after a little fun; do you want to go?"

"Will a duck swim?" Hawkins asked.

"I believe it will," laughed Yankee Doodle. "Where's Moreland?"

"He is somewhere 'round in camp."

"Well, hunt him up; I have permission from Colonel Wood for both of you to go with me, but don't say a word about it to any one else."

"When are you going to start?" Hawkins asked.

"In thirty minutes, if you fellows can get ready in time."

Hawkins hurried off in search of Moreland, whilst Yankee Doodle hunted up Joe and old Pedro.

He found the old man whetting his machete, and laying his hand on his shoulder, said in a half whisper:

"General Shafter sends me on a dangerous mission, Amigo, and you know what that means."

"What does it mean, senor?" the old man asked, looking up at him.

"Why, it means that you are to go too."

"Si, senor," said the old man, his face lighting up with

joy; "my knife is sharp enough now—but some Spanish heads are hard, you know. Who else goes?"

"Hawkins, Moreland and Joe—just five of us; and we must take at least three days' rations with us. We go in a half hour."

"I will be ready then, señor."

He then hunted up Joe, and found the gallant fifer oiling up his revolvers.

"All right," said Joe, when he heard what was wanted; "I'll be ready when you are."

He then went to his quarters, packed up his effects and placed them in charge of a faithful old Cuban who had been performing that duty for him for some time.

Moreland and Hawkins soon reported, and together the little party of five went over the hill in the direction of the village of Sevilla, which was then held by a regiment of United States regulars.

Having the password, Yankee Doodle had no trouble with the pickets, and was soon in the woods between the lines of the two armies. It was his aim to strike the shores of Santiago Bay about half way between the city and Morro Castle, down at the mouth of the harbor. But there was no road leading in that direction, except one from the old iron mine, which led right under the guns of the old fort.

"Now, see here, men," he said to his little party, "I will explain to you now what this business is the general has sent us upon. We are sent to find out things and not to fight, so we mustn't do any fighting unless necessary. If we get the information that the general wants, it will please him more than if we were to kill a hundred Spaniards. Now, be careful and don't jump in for a fight unless it is forced upon us."

"All right, pard," said Hawkins; "just go ahead and we'll follow, because we know that you are game and white all through."

"Give me your hand on that, friend," said Yankee Doodle, and he and Hawkins wrung each other's hand.

"Them's my sentiments, too, pard," said Moreland, extending his hand to Yankee Doodle.

"Let me sign my name to that, too," said Joe, laughingly extending his hand.

"All right, old chap," and the drummer-boy and his fifer clasped hands. "We've been in many a tight place together, Joe, and neither has ever gone back on the other. We have no need to ask each other what we are going to do, for we always know we are going to stand by each other, even in the last ditch. And as for you, Señor Pedro," he added, turning to the old Cuban, "you're as true a friend to me as you are to Cuba; and as you have more than once saved my life, I am always ready to risk my life for you."

"Si, señor," said the old man, as the tears stood in his eyes, "we will stand or fall together."

"So we will, all of us," said Yankee Doodle, and there in the bushes was formed a compact of five as brave men as ever fought for human liberty. And they were men who had faced death before and did not fear to face it again.

"Now, Pedro," said Yankee Doodle, "you know the way. Lead on, and we will follow. Don't lead us into the road

where we can be seen by the enemy, but keep close enough to it for us to get what we are in search of."

"Si, señor, come on," and the old Cuban turned, stooping forward until his hand almost touched his knees.

The others assuming a similar position, followed close behind him. They thus pushed forward and twice crossed narrow little roads leading toward the city.

Presently the old man stopped at the foot of a hill and pointed up toward the crest, saying:

"Up there, señors, you can see the bay and harbor of Santiago."

"How far away, señor?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"About three miles," he replied.

"Can we go up there without being seen?"

"Si, señor, unless there are Spaniards up there."

"Are we likely to find any there?"

"I don't know, señor; I have been up there but once in three years."

"Well, we'll try it, anyway. Go ahead," and again the old man led the way, with the others close at his heels.

It was quite a tedious climb, for where the bushes did not grow thickly were huge boulders; hence it was extremely difficult in many places for them to make the ascent. It was reached, though, finally, and Yankee Doodle found, on using his field glass, that they were much nearer to Morro Castle than to the city. He gazed long and steadily for some two or three miles along the road, which connected the city and the defences at the mouth of the harbor.

"What do you see, pard?" Hawkins asked him.

"I see Morro Castle, the fort at Zocapa, the battery on Smith Cay and the Spanish fleet at anchor in the bay, and everything looks as quiet as a sunny morning in a country town."

"I guess that between here and there," he added, "in the neighborhood of that range of low hills over there, they have thrown up lines of breastworks which we can't see on account of the trees, so we'll have to go down a good deal closer yet and take a look at them."

CHAPTER VII.

ALONG THE DEFENCES OF SANTIAGO.

After scanning the landscape half an hour or so, Yankee Doodle and his little party began to descend the hills facing the bay of Santiago. They were careful to avoid all open spaces, keeping well under cover of the bushes, with a keen lookout for any Spaniards. Twice they came abreast of cleared ground, which they had to circle to the right or left, as the exigencies of the moment required. Finally they reached a patch of woods, from the west side of which they had quite a clear view of the Spanish defences. It was a long line of breastworks, on which soldiers were still at work, and in front of them, extending the entire length, ran some half dozen or more barbed wire fences, apparently some fifty yards apart. At that distance they could only see the posts with the naked eye, but with the field glass the barbed wire was plainly discernible.

Said Yankee Doodle to Jack Moreland, who was standing at his elbow:

"I want to make sure that I'm right. Take a squint at it yourself and tell me what you see," and he handed him the glass.

Moreland put up the glasses and took a long view, after which he said:

"I see a line of earthworks, with several barbed wire fences in front of it."

"That's what I saw, too," said Yankee Doodle, "but I thought I might be mistaken. Now you take a peep at it, Mr. Hawkins," he said, passing the glass over to the other cowboy.

"Yes, that's right," said Hawkins after a minute or two. "It's breastworks and barbed wire fences."

"Those barbed wire fences are bad things to run up against," remarked Moreland. "They can beat any briar patch that ever sprouted."

"Si, señor," assented old Pedro; "they are worse than a wildcat to run up against. They have saved many a Spaniard from the machete, for we could neither go over them, under nor through them."

"It is the first time in military history that such a defence was ever used, and I guess they're going to give our boys a good deal of trouble. They can be cut away with nippers, but while the cutting is being done the boys will be exposed to the fire from behind the breastworks. I wonder if those defences continue all around the city?"

"They do, señor," said old Pedro, "as I have seen them in several places north of the city. It's going to cost us dearly to capture the city by assault, maybe the lives of several thousand brave men."

After remaining there half an hour or so, the little party moved on in a northerly direction, and within a mile of the line of breastworks. A quarter of a mile further on brought them to another clearing, which forced them to make a detour to the right in order to keep under cover of the woods. They were in sight of houses scattered here and there, every one of which was deserted, because they would be directly in the line of fire in case of attack.

In passing around that clearing they struck a road and stopped in the bushes by the side of it on hearing the sound of horsemen coming from the direction of the city.

As they crouched back in the bushes, they saw a party of Spanish cavalry go by, with several officers, one of whom was a general, who old Pedro said was the commander of the Spanish army at Santiago. They had evidently been out inspecting the hills, with a view of establishing ambuscades probably.

"Lord!" exclaimed Hawkins, "I could have knocked him out of his saddle with the greatest ease."

"Any of us could," said Yankee Doodle, "but it would have looked like murder to do it. Yet, if there hadn't been so many of them, I would have made an effort to capture them. It won't do to have them scouring the woods in search of us, for it would prevent our getting the information we're after. I guess we had better push on now," and with that he ran across the road, disappearing in the bushes

on the other side. The others followed, and then, guided by old Pedro, they kept on their way with the road just on their left.

In a little while they reached a farmhouse, in front of which were hitched a dozen or so horses, evidently belonging to the Spanish cavalry. On the piazza of the house sat a couple of officers quietly smoking, and further investigation revealed the fact that the soldiers of the party were engaged in preparing dinner, as two were seen carrying wood into the house by armfuls.

"Don't disturb them," said Yankee Doodle in a whisper, "but let us go around in the woods behind the house."

They soon reached the rear of the premises, and were pushing on beyond, with old Pedro in advance.

Suddenly the old Cuban ran into a couple of Spanish soldiers who were gathering wood.

"Caramba!" exclaimed one of the Spaniards, as he confronted Pedro, "who are you and what do you want?"

"Ere the old Cuban could answer the question the second Spaniard made a break to escape, and would have succeeded had not Hawkins dashed forward and intercepted him. Neither of the Spaniards had any arms, so Hawkins covered him with his revolver and ordered him to halt.

The soldier did so, and Hawkins seized him by the collar and led him further back into the bushes, saying at the same time:

"If you make a noise you're a dead man."

"Bring your man along, Pedro," said Yankee Doodle, and the old Cuban instantly collared the other one. They were taken back a couple of hundred yards or more, where the woods grew thick, and there Yankee Doodle and Hawkins, both of whom were pretty well up in Spanish, proceeded to question them.

"Are you Americanos?" one of the prisoners asked.

"Yes," said Yankee Doodle; "there are about fifty thousand of us around here, and we are looking around to see what you fellows are doing."

"We are not doing much just now," said the prisoner, who seemed to be quite intelligent. "We are only waiting for the Americans to attack us."

"You are ready for us, eh?" said Yankee Doodle.

"Si, señor, and anxious to have your army attack the city."

"You won't have to wait very long. How many soldiers have you got there behind those breastworks?"

"We have enough, señor."

"About how many thousand?"

"I have never counted them, señor," was the evasive reply.

"But how many are said to be there?"

"I don't know, señor."

"Well, now, see here," said Yankee Doodle, very firmly, "you had better tell us what you do know or you won't know anything. While I have no desire to kill a man, except in battle, we will certainly put you to the machete if you don't give up such information as we think you have. War is a bloody business, as you know, and if you want to survive it you had better answer my questions."

The Spaniard seemed to falter and looked a bit frightened as he saw the old Cuban quietly testing the edge of his machete with the thumb of his left hand, while his black eyes were snapping.

"You ought to know, Señor Americano," he finally said, "that a private soldier in a large army doesn't know much of what is going on around him."

"Very true," assented Yankee Doodle; "but an intelligent soldier like you can see a great deal while he may not know anything about the plans of his officers. You will have to answer my questions or else get a taste of that machete there, which has already cleaved many a Spanish head. Now, tell me how many men are behind those breastworks in the city."

"I have heard there are twenty thousand, señor," was the reply.

"Very good," said Yankee Doodle. "Does that line of breastworks extend all around the city?"

"Si, señor."

"And those barbed wire fences, too?"

"Si, señor."

"How many lines of fences are there?"

"Five or six in some places, and more in others."

"How far apart are the fences?"

"About fifty yards, señor; but in some places farther apart, and in others closer."

"How many cannon are mounted along the lines?"

"I don't know, señor, as I have never been along the entire length of the fortifications."

"Where are the most of them mounted?"

"Farther up nearer the city, at places where the Americans are expected to make the effort to break through."

"How about provisions?"

"We get rations every day, señor."

"Do you get full rations?"

"No, señor; the private soldiers get no meat at all."

"Have they taken any guns from the ships to mount on the breastworks?"

"Only some small ones, señor."

"Do the men in the ranks believe they can hold the town?"

"Si, señor; they all say they can whip the Americanos."

Yankee Doodle then turned to Moreland with the remark that he believed the fellow had told the truth.

"So do I," assented the cowboy; "but what's to be done with them, for we can't turn them loose and have a thousand men after us?"

That was said in English, which the two prisoners evidently didn't understand.

"No," said Yankee Doodle, "it wouldn't do to turn them loose, and I am not willing to have them killed; so we had better gag them and tie them to some of these trees."

"Yes," said Hawkins, "that's the best thing to do;" and they proceeded forthwith to tie the two prisoners to a couple of trees in such a way as to entirely preclude any escape, save by the assistance of others who might find them; after which they fixed a gag for each one, so that he could utter no sound other than a groan.

While that was being done the look of disgust on the

face of Pedro was really comical. Only his great love for Yankee Doodle prevented him from cleaving the heads of the two prisoners. As it was, he preserved a grim silence throughout the entire proceedings.

When fully satisfied that the men were securely bound and gagged, Yankee Doodle said to the others in Spanish, in order that the prisoners might understand it:

"Come on now, we'll go back to camp," and with that he led off through the bushes in the direction of the coast; but when he had gone a hundred yards or so he turned to his companions and said:

"I guess they think we are going back, so we will turn now and go the other way, leaving them far enough to the left out of hearing; so lead on, Pedro, and stop grieving because you didn't get a chance to kill those poor fellows."

"Si, señor," said the old Cuban as they started off, "you are the only man in the world I can forgive for such a thing as that."

The others chuckled and followed on behind the old fellow, whilst Jack Moreland remarked:

"Lord! but don't he hate the Spaniards?"

"Like poison," said Hawkins.

"I don't blame him, though," put in Joe; "and I sometimes think it is wrong to stand between him and his vengeance."

"So do I," assented Yankee Doodle; "but hanged if I can stand by and see one cut down another in cold blood. It looks too much like murder."

In a little while they had passed far beyond where they had left the two bound prisoners and were pushing their way northward through the timber.

They were now approaching the outskirts of the city, and the line of breastworks extended further into the country. Here and there they saw farm houses deserted, and some in ruins. In two or three places they obtained glimpses of Spanish scouts, who kept well in the roads, as though they could not see that an enemy would approach by any other route. But as they were not looking for a fight they carefully avoided them.

At three different places they obtained quite good views of the line of earthworks, and saw that they were about the same, with barbed wire fences in front and cannon mounted to sweep open places where the Americans would naturally be expected to charge.

"I don't think they have much cannon," remarked Yankee Doodle, as he handed his field glass to Moreland, "as there are long stretches of breastworks which have nothing behind them but Mausers."

"Yes," said the cowboy, "but a Mauser is a pretty dangerous thing behind earthworks."

"They are dangerous anywhere, if you get before them."

"So they are; and the best way to do is to rush in and mix up with them. At close quarters a brace of revolvers are worth half a dozen Mausers."

"Very true," assented Yankee Doodle, "but we've got to get rid of those barbed wires before you can mix with them, and while we are cutting them the Mausers will make it hot for us."

"See here, pard," said Moreland, "what's the matter wi'

slipping up and cutting those wires on a dark night and making a rush early the next morning?"

"It can be done," said Yankee Doodle, "but I guess they have sentinels out to give warning of the approach of wire cutters."

"But if they do, they can't see far in the dark, and the fire from the breastworks won't do much harm if we don't return it and thus give them our range."

"I guess that's about what will be done, but that's a matter for the general himself to decide."

They thus discussed the pro and con of the situation while picking their way through the bushes northward.

An hour or so later they reached the outskirts of a little village containing something over a hundred houses. It was on one of the main roads, perhaps the most traveled one leading into Santiago. The residents seemed to be quite oblivious of the fact that they would be exposed to the fire of the contending armies within a few days, as men, women and children were moving about with apparent unconcern. Quite a number of Spanish soldiers, men and officers were also seen moving about, some on horseback and others afoot.

"If we had about fifty of the Rough Riders here now," said Yankee Doodle, "we could dash in there and pick up quite a batch of prisoners."

"That's so," said Hawkins, "and I'm sorry they are not here. When we go back, if you give Colonel Wood the hint, he might make a dash and give us a chance for a little fun."

"I'll give him the hint," returned Yankee Doodle; "but, say, here comes a soldier with a girl, and they are making right for this place. We had better get back or they will see us," and they moved back some twenty or thirty paces deeper into the woods, leaving Pedro as a watch.

Some fifteen or twenty minutes passed when the girl's scream was heard, and a fierce "Caramba!"

"By George!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, in a low tone of voice, "they must have run into Pedro, or else he has run into them. Wait here and I'll go forward to see," and with his machete in hand, he slipped away through the bushes in the direction of the spot from whence came the scream.

In a few minutes he came upon old Pedro, who was quietly talking to the young girl, while the Spanish soldier was lying but a few feet away with his head split open.

"What's the trouble, Pedro?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"There is no trouble at all now, señor," was the reply. "The señorita cried for help, and I gave it to her."

"You did right," said Yankee Doodle. "We defend the women of Cuba at all times. But the señorita must not betray our presence here."

"Nor will I, Señor Americano," said the girl, looking up appealingly at him.

CHAPTER VIII.

The young girl was very good looking, and apparently about eighteen years of age, with large, lustrous black eyes. It was very evident that she was intensely excited, as she was trembling like a leaf in the wind.

"Have no fear, señorita," said Yankee Doodle in a kind tone of voice, "for the American soldiers never harm women and children."

"Señor," she said, "they tell us the Americans kill women and children wherever they go."

"It is not true, señorita, for we are now feeding thousands of starving women and children of Cuba. You may return to your home and thank God that we were near enough to protect you from that brutal Spaniard."

"He is not a Spaniard, Señor Americano; he is a Cuban Volunteer whom I have known for years, but I never thought he would seek to harm me."

"Caramba!" hissed old Pedro; "the Volunteers are worse than the Spaniards."

"Señorita," Yankee Doodle asked, "how many Spanish soldiers are in the village there?"

"I don't know, señor; they're coming and going all the time."

"Are there as many as a hundred there?"

"I think so, señor."

"Are there many of them in camp near here?"

"No, señor, they come out from the city, but their scouts are here all the time."

"How are the people in the village? Are they in favor of Spain?"

"Not all of them, señor, but they have to say they are, or the Volunteers will kill them."

"If we let you return home, you will not say anything about having seen us here?"

"No, señor, I will say nothing. But they will find him here," and she pointed at the Volunteer as she spoke, "and then they will ask me about it, and if I do not tell them the truth they will kill me."

"They will kill you if you do," said old Pedro. "So you must say nothing, señorita, except that you left him here in the woods, and don't know how he came to his end. Stick to that and they may not harm you."

"I will do that, señor," said she, and by this time she had quite recovered her composure, and a few minutes later she was permitted to return to the village.

"Now, Pedro," said Yankee Doodle, "we must get around this place, cross the road and keep northward. Do you know the way?"

"Si, señor; but as it is near night we had better remain here; when it is dark I will call on some friends who live in the village, and through them can get a good deal of information."

"Then we had better move farther back," suggested Yankee Doodle.

"Just a little farther, señor," assented the old man, leading the way back about a hundred yards, where they stopped and lay down on the leaves under the wide-spreading branches of a huge live oak, where they made an assault upon their rations.

"What are we to do for water?" Joe asked.

"I will get some, señor," said old Pedro, rising to his feet and stalking through the bushes.

He was gone nearly half an hour, after which he returned with a pail of clear, sparkling water.

"Where did you get it?" they asked.

"At the spring, senor," and he pointed over his shoulder with the thumb of his left hand in the direction parallel with the road.

"But the pail—where did you get that?"

"I borrowed it, senor, from a poor Cuban woman whose husband has been slain by the Volunteers."

"Does she know we are here?"

"No, senor, she thinks I am alone. I promised to return the pail when it is dark."

An hour later the sun went down and the sombre shadows of night settled heavily over the scene, and a little later Pedro said to the others:

"I will go into the village, senor, and if you remain here you will be safe."

"How long will you be gone?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"I don't know, senor; it depends upon what I see and hear. It may be one, two or three hours before I return; but if you stay here under this tree you will be safe. My signal will be the cry of the whippoorwill, and you must give me the same," and with that the old man glided away in the dark, leaving the other four reclining on the bed of leaves under the huge oak.

The old man was gone until near midnight, and when he returned he found them all asleep except Joe, who was on watch. Without saying a word he lay down on the leaves and in a few minutes was soundly sleeping.

Joe called up Hawkins, who was to relieve him on guard duty, to whom he whispered that Pedro had come back.

"All right," said the cowboy.

Joe then laid down for his nap.

The old man was up at sunrise and had a story to tell.

Said he, turning to Yankee Doodle:

"I visited the families of half a dozen friends, and through them learned that the enemy was expecting General Pando from the north coast with an army of ten thousand men; that when he arrived it was expected the entire Spanish army would march out of the city to surround the Americans and cut them to pieces."

The other four chuckled over the idea, while Yankee Doodle remarked that it would be a soft snap for Shafter if the Spaniards would try that game.

"But did you see no Spaniards?" he asked of old Pedro.

"Si, senor; I met two officers, who were drunk and insulting everybody whom they met. They drew their swords and struck two soldiers, ran up against me, ordered me roughly to get out of the way, and one of them struck me with his clenched hand. They are both dead now, and I found a belt full of Spanish gold on each one," and with that he produced the belts for examination by the others.

"By George!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "that's what we call a windfall in America."

"Si, senor; it's what we call a deadfall in Cuba," and he proceeded at once to empty the contents of one belt into the other, which he buckled around his waist, pulling his blouse over it.

"You're in luck," said Hawkins.

"Si, senor; I shall keep it until the war ends, and then buy a home."

"That's right," said Yankee Doodle; "keep your eyes

open for another deadfall like that, and you can soon stock a nice little farm."

After eating a breakfast the little party went to the edge of the wood where they could overlook the village. They saw that there was great excitement there over the killing of two Spanish officers in the street the night before. Soldiers were seen arresting every man who lived in the place.

"Pedro," said Yankee Doodle, "I'm afraid you are going to be the cause of some innocent man's being shot."

"What matters it, senor?" he replied; "all the men who are friends of Cuba are with Gomez and Garcia. Those who are arrested there now are worth nothing to either side; it is a just punishment to them to stay where the Spaniards can shoot them at their leisure."

"Oh, I guess some of them are friends of Cuba," said Yankee Doodle.

"Very few, senor. If they are, they are majaces (skulkers), all of them, and don't deserve any sympathy."

They moved on around the village, crossing the road some little distance from it, and again plunged into the woods.

They had advanced scarcely fifty yards beyond the roadside when they ran into a party of nearly a dozen Spanish soldiers, who were dividing some plunder they had secured somewhere the night before. Their rifles were leaning against a tree, and the moment they saw the two cowboys one of their number sung out:

"Caramba! Americanos!"

Quick as a flash, seeing that it was fight or run, Moreland and Hawkins sprang among them with their revolvers and began dropping them right and left. Half of them were down within thirty seconds; whereupon the others made a break to escape. Pedro cut down two and Joe and Yankee Doodle each dropped one, while Hawkins and Moreland dashed on and overtook the other two, whose lives would have been spared had they asked for quarter instead of viciously resisting. As it was, they were quickly despatched.

Upon investigation they found among the plunder that the villains were dividing women's dresses and jewelry.

"The fiends!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle. "I wonder if they killed the poor victims they robbed?"

"They always do, senor," said old Pedro.

"Well, then, they deserve the fate that has overtaken them. We will let everything lie right here, so their comrades may know when they find them that Cubans and Americans are not as they are. If they have any money, though, we'll take that."

The bodies were searched, but very little money found.

"Come on," said Yankee Doodle, "let us get away from such a scene as this. If I could have dodged them, I would have done so, but after they saw us, we had to fight for self-preservation."

"And the fun," suggested Jack Moreland.

"I don't enjoy such amusement," remarked Yankee Doodle.

"Well, I do, when they are Spaniards," returned the cowboy.

"Si, señor," said old Pedro, with a grim smile; "vengeance is a pleasure to me."

"Now, Pedro, do you know which way we are going?"

"Si, señor, we will soon get close to the Spanish lines if we keep on this way."

"Just what I want, then; but be careful that we are not seen."

They pushed on for a mile or so, and finally came in sight again of a clearing that had been made by the Spaniards in front of their line of works.

It seems that the works there were finished, as there were no workmen in sight. It was the same line of half a dozen barbed wire fences and earthworks as far as they could see to the right.

Again turning and pushing forward, they wended their way for miles till they reached the village of Caimanes, which was almost west of Santiago.

"I've been here before," said Yankee Doodle, "when I was scouting for Admiral Sampson. And you know everybody in these hills, Pedro."

"Si, señor, but the men are with Garcia. Spanish soldiers are all over these hills, for they are not fortified at all on this side of the bay, as the Spaniards think that an army cannot approach the city through such a rough country."

"Well, I guess they are right. They certainly couldn't bring any artillery through it, nor could a single company of infantry be marched anywhere through it two abreast."

"Look out!" said Joe warningly. "Keep back in the bushes, as I hear horses coming up the road."

They crept back into the bushes further away from the roadside and remained concealed there until the squadron of Spanish cavalry rode by within forty yards of them.

Old Pedro made his way through the bushes close to the roadside to see if he could hear anything spoken by the officers or men.

After they had passed he returned and stated that all he overheard was the remark by one soldier, who said to his comrade that Pando's army couldn't be more than three days' march away.

"Yes," said Yankee Doodle, "they are looking for Pando, but I guess Garcia's men will be able to hold him in check, as I cannot see how our army could get around on this side of the bay without endangering its communication with the fleet in case of supplies. I guess we had better wait here until night, so you can slip into the village, Pedro, and see what news you can pick up."

"Si, señor, that is the best thing to do;" so they pushed back further into the woods from the roadside, where there was a dense shade and the air comparatively cool. There the four Americans lay down to rest from the fatigue of their long tramp.

In the meantime Pedro said he would go forward and see if he could meet anyone he knew in the village.

They did not see him again until midnight, and they were apprehensive that some disaster had befallen him.

When he did return he brought with him a basket filled with fruit, which the patriotic wives of the insurgents in the village had given him.

"And every one," said he, "inquired if I knew where you were, señor, and I told them you were with the American army, and that when they captured the city you would pay them a visit."

"That is right, Pedro," said Yankee Doodle, "for the wives of the insurgents in that village were the kindest friends I have ever met in Cuba. Did you find out if any of the insurgents from there have been killed?"

"Si, señor, there are four new-made widows there. I told them that soon they will be avenged."

"Ah, Amigo," said Yankee Doodle, "revenge never satisfies the heart of a woman for the loss of her beloved."

"No, señor, but it gives some satisfaction."

"Yes, to some people, and much more to a man than to a woman."

It was then about midnight, and the men all laid down to sleep, as the old Cuban assured them they were in no danger of being discovered before daylight. Each one obtained a refreshing sleep, and was awakened by the singing of the birds in the trees overhead, even before all the stars had faded away.

Then they prepared to resume their return march, after a hasty breakfast. Old Pedro led off with the intention of crossing the main road and striking a narrow trail which ran parallel to it, through which he expected to make twice the speed he could in picking his way through the woods.

They ran across the main road and reached the cover of the bushes on the other side, when they were startled by the hoarse voice of a Spanish sentinel calling out:

"Alerta! Alerta!"

CHAPTER IX.

A CLOSE CALL—YANKEE DOODLE RETURNS TO REPORT TO THE GENERAL.

On hearing the call of the Spanish sentries, the little party instantly crouched down under the bushes and waited to see whether or not they had been discovered. They heard voices a few paces on their left, but only Pedro was near enough to understand what was said.

He turned quickly to the others and whispered:

"They have seen us, señors, and they are looking for us."

"How many are there?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Don't know, señor; they are scouts waiting here in the woods. Come," and he dodged off to the right, running in a crouching position, keeping well under the bushes between the Spaniards and the roadside.

The others followed him quickly, but they had advanced scarcely fifty feet ere a volley of some thirty or forty rifles sent a shower of bullets after them.

Both Joe and Yankee Doodle had their clothes torn by Mauser bullets, while Moreland, who still wore his hair long, in cowboy style, had a lock of it clipped from his head.

"Keep right on," whispered Yankee Doodle, as he ran through the bushes close behind old Pedro.

They heard the sounds of pursuit for more than a hundred yards or so, when Hawkins said:

"Pards, they are trailing us."

"Well, keep on," said Yankee Doodle; "we don't want to stop to fight unless compelled to."

Old Pedro led the way with a skill and speed that put the others to their mettle to keep up with him, and twice he had to stop as some of the party behind him fell heavily among the tangled vines through which they were coursing their way.

Finally he stopped and straightened up to listen.

"They are not following us, senor," he said after a pause of a minute or two.

"All right," said Yankee Doodle, "but the sooner we get away from here the better it will be for us, for there must be a pretty good crowd of them back there."

"But, see here," Joe asked, "did you see any of those fellows?"

"No, senor."

"Are you sure they were Spaniards?"

"Si, senor. Why?"

"Well, because it seems to me that were they Spaniards they would not have been hiding in the bushes there. I half suspect they were Cubans."

"You are wrong, senor," said the old guide, "for I heard the sentry telling the others that he was sure he saw some Americanos run across the road."

"That settles it," said Yankee Doodle, "for they never would have fired on us had they been Cubans after hearing that we were Americans; but I can't understand why they should be concealed in the bushes when so close to their own line, unless they are expecting American or Cuban scouts along the road there."

"I reckon that's it," said Jack Moreland, "and I guess Bill's barber is with them," and he exhibited quite a chunk of hair that had been clipped from the right side of his comrade's head.

Hawkins chuckled and remarked:

"I reckon you'll cut the balance of it off, eh?"

"You bet I will," he replied, "if I don't get hung up in the bushes before I get back to camp."

"Oh, there isn't much danger of that," chuckled Bill, "as long as you are on foot."

"Do you know where we are now?" Yankee Doodle asked of the old Cuban.

"I do," said Joe, speaking up before Pedro could answer.

"You do, eh? Where are we?"

"In the woods," replied Joe.

"Long head," remarked Yankee Doodle; "can you show us the way out of it?"

"I'm no guide," remarked Joe.

"Come, senor," said Pedro, leading off again, and the others followed him without question, and soon found themselves in a dense thicket of vines and bushes that were almost impenetrable.

The old man turned to the right and slowly made his way through the bushes for upward of an hour, by which

time they had reached the limit of the thicket. He stopped there for a little while to listen and get his bearing.

"Are you lost, old man?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Oh, no, senor; we are all here."

The two cowboys chuckled, and Hawkins remarked:

"I'll gamble on that."

"So will I," assented Joe; "what's the stake?"

"Our lives," said the old Cuban; "and if you don't keep quiet it will be a losing game."

"Now, boys, shut up," Yankee Doodle suggested, "and let him follow his own judgment."

The old man led off again, and they followed him for another hour without a word being spoken.

Presently they came to a clearing, beyond which they had a full view of the barbed wire fences and the Spanish intrenchment, not more than two hundred yards away.

"Now, come, senors," said the old man, the first to break the silence, and again he led the way through the bushes just far enough away from the clearing to keep out of sight of the enemy.

Mile after mile passed, and then they struck a road which they had crossed the day before, leading north from the city of Santiago.

"Do you know where we are now, Pedro?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Si, senor, we are now between the main army of the Spaniards and the outpost at the village of El Caney."

"How far are we from El Caney?"

"About a mile, senor, and two miles from the city."

"Do you know anything about what the force is at El Caney?"

"There are between two and three thousand soldiers there, senor, and they intend to fight there."

"How do you know they do?"

"Because they have entrenched themselves there in order to hold the road."

"Is there any chance for us to see those intrenchments?"

"Si, senor, but I've seen them already, a week ago."

"I'd like to see them myself, in order to be able to tell the general that I have."

"Come on, then, and we will see them."

"Understand, now," said Yankee Doodle, "we don't want them to see us."

"Si, senor; keep close behind me."

In about twenty minutes they were in sight of the village of El Caney, where they saw a couple of Spanish regiments encamped along a line of breastworks, but there were no barbed wire fences. The position was a good one from a military standpoint, but it was devoid of artillery, a fact that caused Hawkins to make a remark that they didn't expect to hold it, since they were not willing to risk any cannon in defence of it.

"That's what I think, too," said Yankee Doodle, "but two or three thousand Mausers behind those works can do an awful lot of damage."

"All the same," said Moreland, "our boys will go over it like rabbits over a log."

"You bet they will," assented Hawkins, "and when they

do, the fellows behind them have got to do some pretty tall running to save themselves from death or capture."

"Let's get back to camp now, boys, just as quick as we can," said Yankee Doodle, "for we have now seen all that the general wants to know about it."

They were about to start southward again, when the sound of the approach of a troop of cavalry caused them to move back into the bushes.

The Spanish troopers passed within pistol shot of them, but a few minutes later were out of sight in a bend of the road.

"Now come on, boys," said Yankee Doodle, "we must reach camp to-night if it is possible for us to do so."

They made a dash across the road, entered the woods again and pushed on up the hillside.

"We're going to have a storm," said Joe, as loud peals of thunder reverberated all through the mountains.

"Si, señor," assented Pedro; "the very heavens are going to open on us. If we go fast for another mile we can find shelter in a hut," and he led off in a trot that put the others to their mettle to keep up with him.

They were not destined, however, to reach the shelter before the storm broke upon them, for in less than five minutes heavy rain drops began to patter on the leaves. Old Pedro came to a halt under an immense oak, with the remark:

"We can't reach the hut, señor."

"Well, then, we'll have to take it," said Moreland, and take it they did.

Such a downpour of rain no one in the party had ever before seen, except the old Cuban. It fell in torrents, and Hawkins offered to bet his rifle that the rain drops were as big as billiard balls.

"They are as big as watermelons, pard," said Moreland, as a great torrent of water came rushing down the hillside with a roar that almost drowned their voices.

"Say, pard," said Hawkins after a few minutes, during which the volume increased, "if we don't tie ourselves together, we'll be washed away."

"Hold to a bush," laughed Yankee Doodle.

"Hold to nothing," growled Hawkins. "A little more of this will wash the whole mountain away."

Old Pedro stood grim and silent, leaning against a tree, listening to the remarks of his comrades. He was used to that sort of thing, and knew that while the storm threatened to drown out all creation, it would soon pass away, and they could resume their tramp. Though drenched to the skin, their ammunition was safe, as they used metallic cartridges.

The downpour lasted about an hour, when it ceased as suddenly as it began, and the sun came out hotter than ever, if possible. The intense heat of the sun filled the air with a steam-like vapor.

Waiting a little while longer for the water to run off along the hillside, the little party resumed their tramp.

It was nearly night when the little party, weary and foot-sore, reached the village of Sevilla, which was then held by the Rough Riders under Colonel Wood.

"Where in the world have you fellows been?" the colonel

asked of Yankee Doodle; "we have missed you for three days."

"We have been the whole length of the Spanish intrenchments," was the reply.

"The deuce you have."

"Yes, and I must see the general just as quick as possible. Do you know where he can be found to-night?"

"No, I don't, but probably General Wheeler can tell you."

"Well, where is he?"

"About three miles from here, near the old brewery we captured the other day."

"Can you see me through there, Colonel?"

"Of course, I can," and half a dozen Cubans were called up and instructed to take Señor Yankee Doodle to General Wheeler without a moment's loss of time.

The two cowboys and Joe remained behind, while Yankee Doodle and old Pedro pushed on for the general's headquarters. That famous old Confederate soldier was resting in a hammock after a hard day's work at the front, when one of his staff led Yankee Doodle into his presence.

"General," said Yankee Doodle, "I'm looking for General Shafter; Colonel Wood told me that you probably could tell me where I could find him."

"He is about five miles in the rear," replied the general, glancing at the young American from head to foot as if sizing him up. "What is your business with him?"

"I wish to make an important report to him, General, as I have just come in from a three days' scout along the entire length of the Spanish intrenchments around the city."

"That was a big job, young man," remarked the general.

"I found it so, sir," he returned; "and the army will find a still bigger one when it advances."

"I've no doubt of it. I'll send one of my staff with you to the general's quarters at once. What is your name?"

"Phil Freeman, sir."

"He is Yankee Doodle, Señor General," said old Pedro, who was standing a few feet away.

"Ah!" exclaimed the general, looking at him keenly; "I've heard that name frequently, and I'm glad to see you," and he extended his hand to Yankee Doodle, who grasped and shook it warmly.

In less than five minutes he was mounted on a good horse and on his way to Shafter's headquarters, accompanied by Pedro and a staff officer. It was a rough road, but had been greatly improved by the engineers, yet it took them nearly two hours to make the five miles in the dark.

When the general saw him he said, as he extended his hand:

"I've been waiting all the evening expecting your arrival."

"I've come just as quickly as I could, General, and have traveled eight miles since night set in."

He then, with old Pedro close by his side, made a verbal report to the general, every word of which was taken down by a stenographer.

The general asked him many questions, his answers to which were corroborated by explanations from the old Cu-

ban, whose knowledge of the country which they had traversed enabled him to give exact distances.

From the way he was questioned by the general Yankee Doodle inferred that the outpost at El Caney would be the scene of the first attack.

Old Pedro was required to make a rough map of the road from the city to El Caney, as well as the lines of intrenchments thrown up there by the enemy.

"You have done splendid work, my young friend," said the general to Yankee Doodle, "and I thank you, and each one who accompanied you, in the name of the whole army."

"Thank you, General," said both of them; "we have tried to do our duty, and are glad that you are pleased with our efforts."

"I am more than pleased," said the general, "and you will soon see the value of your work in the results that are to follow."

CHAPTER X.

IN THE THICK OF THE FIGHT AT EL CANEY.

Early the next morning after his report to General Shafter, Yankee Doodle found nearly the entire army on the move, pushing toward the front. The general himself rode over to General Wheeler's headquarters with his staff, and Yankee Doodle and Pedro followed close behind.

"Amigo," said he to the old Cuban, "we're going to have a fight."

"Where, senor?" Pedro asked.

"I don't know; but somewhere out there in front."

"Senor, my machete is sharp, and will soon rust if I don't use it. Are you going into the fight?"

"Yes, if I can find out where it takes place," was the reply.

At Wheeler's headquarters couriers and staff officers were seen darting here and there carrying orders. Yankee Doodle watched them for half an hour or so, and then walked in boldly, saluted the general, and asked:

"Have you any orders for me, General?"

"No, not to-day," was the reply.

"Well, then, will you kindly assign me where I can have a hand in the racket?"

A smile illuminated the broad face of the general, who remarked:

"You had better keep out of it; somebody is going to get hurt."

"Oh, thunder!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "I'm not built that way, General."

General Wheeler, who was a small-sized man, spoke up quickly:

"You are just my style, young man. Go over and get with Colonel Wood's crowd, and you'll be right in it from the beginning."

"Thank you, General," and he saluted and retired quickly to join old Pedro, who was waiting outside for him.

"Come, Pedro," said he, "we will go back to Colonel Wood's men, who are going to be the first in the fight."

"Si, senor," and they both set out almost on the run. When they came up with the Rough Riders they found the entire command under arms awaiting orders.

"Colonel," said Yankee Doodle, going up to Colonel Wood, "General Wheeler told me that if I joined you today I could have a hand in the little racket."

"All right, my boy," said the colonel; "I guess we'll be in it pretty heavy to-day, and you can go in with the boys to your heart's content."

"Thank you," he returned; and he immediately started out in search of Joe and the two cowboys who had accompanied him on the scouting expedition. When he found Moreland he saw that his hair had been trimmed.

"Hello!" he said; "been to the barber's?"

"Yes, and it was an American barber, too. I don't like this Spanish style of hair cutting. Say, what's up now?"

"Fun ahead," was the reply. "We are going to have a chance at them, and I want us five to keep well together."

"Good!" said Moreland; "I'm just itching for a chance."

Soon the little party of five were together near the head of the line, where Colonels Wood and Roosevelt were waiting for orders to move.

The orders soon came, and the whole line, including the Rough Riders, with several regiments of regulars, moved forward in the direction of El Caney.

"Didn't I tell you so?" said Yankee Doodle to Jack and Bill Hawkins; "the first blow is to be struck at the village we passed yesterday."

It took them several hours to get within striking distance of the Spaniards, whose scouts were driven in by the Rough Riders, who had been sent in advance.

As they reached the crest of the hill that overlooked the Spanish intrenchments old Pedro, with his eyes flashing with the light of battle, pointed his machete at the Spaniards and sung out joyfully:

"We are coming, Espanolo!"

Many of the cowboys who understood Spanish heard his exclamation and cheered him.

"We are going in with you, old man!" sung out some of them.

"Si, Senor Americanos; I have prayed for this day, and am happy."

"We are happy, too, old man," they replied. "We'll be right in it with you."

"Now, Pedro," called out Yankee Doodle, "we are going to win this fight, but many a brave man will fall. Don't drop your rifle and charge with your machete until the order comes for us to go in. Then we will all go together."

"Si, senor, I know how to fight," said the grim old warrior; and he tried the edge of his machete with his thumb, as if to make sure that its razor-like sharpness was to his satisfaction. Then he was seen to press it to his lips, whispering words of endearment to it.

"Boys," said Bill Hawkins, "keep your eye on that old Cuban to-day, for when he mixes in with those Spaniards you will see some of the finest work ever done on a battlefield."

Presently the ball opened with the boom of the great guns of the fleet miles away on the left. Morro Castle and the other works at the mouth of the harbor would have all they could do to hold them and could render no assistance to the army in the intrenchment.

In a little while they heard a boom from one of the immense shells thrown by the Vesuvius with its two hundred pounds of dynamite. The concussion was felt in the air by friend and foe alike. Americans and Spaniards knew what it was. The Rough Riders yelled and cheered, while the Spaniards behind their intrenchments stood in grim silence, as if dreading the onslaught they were looking for.

When another shell from the Vesuvius exploded the Spaniards in the intrenchments at El Caney, as if exasperated by the sound, opened fire with their Mausers. Then the regulars and the cowboys began to put in their deadly work, and for more than two hours the firing was kept up with deadly effect.

Scores of the Americans were hit, and not a few were killed, which fact so exasperated the entire command that they yelled by hundreds at their officers:

"Let us go in and mix up with them!"

It seemed as though they would charge without orders, for they didn't like to stand off and exchange shots with men crouching behind breastworks.

Presently the order to charge was given, and with a wild shout the Rough Riders and regulars sprang forward.

The Spaniards pumped lead as fast as they could, but aimed wild.

On, on, rushed the Americans, with old Pedro a few paces in advance, who was the first to scale the work. Yankee Doodle and Joe, with Moreland and Hawkins, were close behind him.

The next moment the cowboys swarmed over the works, revolver in hand, and the most terrific slaughter of the day began.

The Spaniards fought bravely, but didn't stand it ten minutes. They retreated toward the city, fighting every step of the way, with the Rough Riders pressing them close. But for the underbrush hundreds who escaped would have been killed; yet the Rough Riders pushed on after them, keeping up so close to them they had little or no time to turn and fire. The deadly revolver in each hand of the Rough Riders practically made them equal to double their number. They were pretty near as much at home in the bush as were the Spaniards. As for old Pedro, Yankee Doodle and Hawkins, with Joe and Moreland close behind them, tried hard to keep up with him. Had they chosen to do so they could have trailed him through the bushes by the gaping wounds made by his terrible machete. Every now and then they heard his shout of "Cuba Libre!" and a crashing thud of his weapon.

By and by orders came to stop the pursuit, as there was danger of their getting too far in advance of the rest of the line. When the others stopped the old Cuban kept on, paying no heed to orders.

"Boys," said Yankee Doodle to Moreland and Hawkins, "we must catch the old fellow and bring him back with us or this will be his last fight."

"All right, pard," sung out Moreland; and the three dashed forward in the direction where they had last seen him. They had to advance at least fifty yards before they caught sight of him, and then they found him in a terrific hand-to-hand combat with three Spanish soldiers, who were trying to bayonet him, having fired their last cartridge.

Twice they saw him leap aside to avoid a bayonet, one of which grazed him so closely as to become entangled in his blouse. The fellow at the other end of the Mauser had his head split clear to his neck; the other two were despatched by Moreland and Hawkins.

"Hold on, Pedro!" called out Yankee Doodle; "we are ordered to go back."

"Why so, senor?" the old man asked; "are not the enemy retreating?"

"Si, Amigo, but we are far in advance of our line, and are in danger of being surrounded by the Spaniards."

The old fellow was panting from the terrible exertion of the fight, while his hand and arm to the elbow was crimson with gore, which had trickled from his machete every time he raised it to strike a blow.

"I will go, senor," said he, "for I have done good work this day."

"None other has done so well, Amigo, and you should be satisfied."

"Nay, senor, I shall never be satisfied while there remains an armed Spaniard on Cuban soil."

"Nor will I, senor," said Yankee Doodle; "but we can't clean them all out in one day."

They started to return, and had gone perhaps fifty yards, when Yankee Doodle suddenly halted with an exclamation of, "Good heavens, boys, where is Joe?"

"I saw him reel and fall on the other side of the road," said Hawkins.

"Let's find him then, for I'd as soon be killed myself as to hear of his death."

"Follow me, then," said Hawkins; "I think I know just where he fell," and he led off through the bushes, followed by the others. All the way it was a trail of death, marked by the bodies of dead and wounded, friend and foe. By and by they reached the trenches in which the Spaniards had made such a desperate stand. Then for the first time Yankee Doodle saw the awful result of the fight, for there was scarcely a foot of space in the ditch that was not covered by dead or wounded enemies. He looked upon the scene with a feeling akin to horror, but on the face of grim old Pedro was a smile a satisfaction as he remarked:

"They are good Spaniards now, senor; they will do Cuba no more harm."

"Here, come this way," called out Hawkins, leading the way over the breastworks and across the road to the open field through which the Rough Riders had charged. There in the tall grass lay many of the brave fellows weltering in their blood, many dead and still more wounded.

"It was along here somewhere," said Hawkins, "that I last saw him," and they began looking in the grass for him.

"Here he is, senor," called out Pedro, some fifteen or twenty feet to the left of Yankee Doodle, at the same time stooping and raising the body of the young fifer in his arms.

"Is he dead, Pedro?" Yankee Doodle eagerly asked.

"No, señor; we'll take him out of this sun into the shade of the trees."

The old fellow bore him in his arms as he would a child, while Joe seemed to be limp and lifeless. On reaching the shade of the trees the old man laid him down tenderly on the grass and proceeded to search for a wound. As he was doing so, Joe opened his eyes and looked up at the brave fellows around him.

"He is not hit, señor," said Pedro; "he is overcome by the heat."

"Thank God for that!" ejaculated Yankee Doodle, kneeling by his side and fanning him with his hat.

Pedro sprang to his feet, saying:

"He must have water," and the next moment he was gone in search of it.

"Joe, old man," Yankee Doodle asked, "how do you feel?"

"All broke up," was the reply.

"Are you hit?"

"Yes—by the sun. It is too hot for me. Can you get me some water?"

"Pedro has gone after some."

Joe closed his eyes for a few moments as if going to sleep. Then he opened them again quickly to ask:

"Did we lick 'em, boys?"

"You bet we did, pard," replied Hawkins quickly.

"Then we'll take the city."

"I hope so," assented Yankee Doodle, "but all the Spaniards have gone in behind the intrenchments there, and we were ordered not to follow them any further. I guess the general knows what he's doing."

"Yes, of course," said Joe; "but if it wasn't so hot we would soon be able to take it."

Old Pedro was gone nearly half an hour. When he returned with a pail of water, which he had procured somewhere in the vicinity, he gave Joe a drink of it, after which the other three took copious draughts, and the balance of it was poured on the head of the young fifer.

It was nearly night before he could be moved. He was so weak that he could walk only when held up by a man on each side of him.

"We must get away from here," said Pedro, "for this is no place to spend the night."

"Where shall we go?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Where the rest of his friends are."

It was soon ascertained that the Rough Riders were to hold the position they had won from the enemy, so they did not have to move him very far. By means of a couple of blankets on the ground, with a third one fastened at the corners above him, with four sticks to keep off the dew, he was made comfortable and safe for the rest of the night. That duty attended to, Yankee Doodle, accompanied by Hawkins, went through the Rough Riders' camp to find out the extent of their losses during the fight. They had suffered terribly, losing heavily both officers and men, but the survivors, though almost prostrated by the heat of the day, were still brimful of fight, and more than eager to renew it the next morning.

Colonel Wood and Lieutenant-Colonel Roosevelt visited

the wounded and talked cheerfully with them and the survivors. They had become the idols of the brave fellows, for all day long they were in the thick of the fight, right up in front, cheering the men on with a fearlessness that excited the highest admiration.

"Hello!" exclaimed Colonel Wood, as he met Yankee Doodle. "You got through all right, did you?"

"Yes, Colonel, I got clean over the breastworks and well into the bushes beyond them, but Joe fell, overcome by the heat on the other side of the road."

"Sorry to hear that; where is he?"

"We have taken good care of him. We have fixed him up for the night, and I guess he'll be all right in the morning."

"I'm sorry you haven't your drum here, for I think it would cheer the boys up," remarked the colonel.

"I don't think there is any need of cheering up, colonel, for every one whom I have met is eager to renew the fight at sunrise."

"I guess they will have a chance to do so," observed the colonel, "but the fight to-day has cost us dearly."

"Yes, for many a brave man has been knocked out. The Spaniards are stubborn fighters. Their officers have made them believe that they will be shot if captured, so they prefer to die fighting."

"Are you sure of that?" the colonel asked.

"Quite sure of it, colonel, for I've often been asked by the Cubans themselves in the interior if it was true, and they were very surprised when I assured them that the Americans never shot prisoners or wounded men."

"Well," said the colonel, "they certainly are the most stubborn fighters I ever heard of, and I guess that is the cause of it."

"Yes, that and their very great hatred of the Americans."

While he was talking with the colonel, a courier from General Wheeler came up inquiring for Yankee Doodle, saying that the general wished to see him at once.

"Here he is," said the colonel, and Yankee Doodle at once went away with him.

CHAPTER XI.

OLD PEDRO AND HIS CHICKEN—THE FIGHT ON THE LEFT.

Yankee Doodle followed the courier about a mile and a half to the headquarters of the great cavalry commander, whose three thousand cavalrymen were mounted on foot, for their horses had not been brought with them from Tampa. It was perhaps well for them and the entire army, as they could not have been of much service in the woods and on those rugged hills.

He found the general, who was an old man sixty-two years of age, small, gray, wiry, very much fatigued by the terrific struggle of the day. He was lying in a hammock that had been slung for him.

"General," said he, "you have sent for me; I am at your service."

"Thank you," said the general; "you are very prompt, I see."

"Yes, General, I try to obey orders quickly."

"Very good. That spirit seems to pervade the whole army. What I wish to see you about is to make a few inquiries about the enemy's intrenchments in my immediate front, more particularly where the road from El Caney enters the city. General Shafter informs me that you had inspected the entire length of the enemy's breastworks very recently."

"Yes, General; their line of intrenchments runs right up to the road and stops there, but commences again on the other side of it, leaving a space of about twenty feet in width for a passage of wagons and troops in and out of the city, and they have some artillery mounted on both sides, so as to sweep the road clear to the top of the hill."

"Do their barbed wire fences cross the road, or stop there as the trenches do?" the general asked.

"They run about the same way," he replied, "leaving an open space of about twenty feet, as near as I could judge."

"Is there much open space in front of their lines at that point?"

"Yes, they have cut away the timber for more than three hundred yards, so as to have a clear view for that distance."

"How many lines of barbed wire fences have they at that point?"

"Some five or six, sir, about fifty or sixty feet apart, and the wires are very strongly fastened to posts set deep in the ground."

"I thank you very much," said the general. "I believe that is all I have to ask you."

Yankee Doodle understood from that the interview was at an end, yet he hesitated for a few moments as if he had something more to tell.

Have you anything more to say?" the general asked, noticing his hesitation.

"I was thinking of repeating to you what I have already said to General Shafter, that the enemy's line of defence extends to the north side of the city, and there curves westward, but they do not extend very far west, as they evidently fear no attack from that direction. Even since I made that discovery the impression has remained with me that if a brigade of our troops could be sent around there to push in on the left flank of the enemy when the fight opens again, they could march into the rear of the intrenchments and thus get them between two fires. They would either have to get out, double up on their centre and right wing or be captured."

The famous cavalry commander glanced scrutinizingly at him in silence for a few moments, with a grim smile on his face, remarking:

"You are quite a strategist, I see."

"I don't know, General," he returned; "but that is what I would do myself were I in command of this army. Of course, I haven't the cheek to advise old soldiers who have been in service longer than I have lived."

"Well, let me say to you, my boy, that I'd do precisely the same thing myself; but I fear we haven't the brigade to spare from the front to make that move, as in the event of failure a terrible disaster would follow."

Yankee Doodle took leave of the general and returned to the camp of the rough riders, where he found Joe resting

quietly, with old Pedro fast asleep on a blanket near by. Hawkins and Moreland had strolled away to mingle with their companions in other parts of the camp.

Feeling very much exhausted from the toil of the day, he lay down himself and was soon wrapped in slumber. When he awoke in the morning he found that Pedro had gone away somewhere, but that Hawkins and Moreland were still soundly sleeping, and so was Joe.

"I wonder where we will get rations this morning?" said he to himself, "for I have a knawing appetite which nothing in the world will satisfy except something solid and good to eat."

A few minutes later Joe awoke with a yawn, and Yankee Doodle turned to him with:

"How do you feel, old man?"

"Weak and hungry," he replied. "What have you got to eat?"

"Nothing in the world but leaves and grass."

"That's a poor breakfast," said Joe with a faint smile. "Where is Pedro?"

"I don't know; he was gone when I awoke; I guess, though, he is out foraging somewhere."

Their voices awoke Moreland and Hawkins, both of whom arose from their blankets and began rolling them up.

"How about breakfast this morning?" Yankee Doodle asked them.

"Hanged if I know," replied Hawkins; "but I'll have one if I have to broil a piece of Spaniard."

"Well, no Spaniard for me," remarked Moreland; "I guess Uncle Sam has got something for us around here somewhere, and I'm going to find out where it is."

"All right," said Yankee Doodle, "when you find it, blow your horn and we'll come to you."

"I'll bring you some," was the reply; and with that he stalked away in the direction of Colonel Woods' quarters.

He was scarcely out of sight when old Pedro appeared, bringing with him a chicken, whose neck he had just wrung, and was picking the feathers as he approached, throwing them from him.

"Hello!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle, "is Uncle Sam issuing live chickens to-day?"

"No, senor; this is a Spaniard who escaped yesterday. If you'll make a fire we'll soon have a breakfast."

"How are you going to cook it?"

"Broil it on the coals."

They soon had a fire started, and by the time it was hot the old Cuban had the chicken ready. They had neither salt nor pepper, but men with voracious appetites are not disposed to go hungry for the lack of condiments.

The fragrance of broiling chicken soon brought a score of other hungry Rough Riders to the spot, each with pieces of hardtack and bacon in his hand.

"Where did you get your rations?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"The company commissary sent them to us. Where did you get your chicken?"

"Captured him."

"Do you want to exchange any chicken for bacon?"

"Not this morning," said Yankee Doodle, shaking his head.

They were standing around watching the chicken broiling when Moreland returned with a supply of army rations, which he deposited on the leaves near the fire.

Pedro at once took charge of them and Moreland and Hawkins stood by talking with the other Rough Riders for a few minutes. Suddenly they heard Pedro exclaim:

"Caramba!" and dart away in pursuit of one of the Rough Riders who was disappearing in the bushes.

A roar of laughter from those around the fire caused Yankee Doodle to make the discovery that the chicken had disappeared from the coals.

"The chicken is gone," he said, "but I'll bet my revolver that it'll come back."

"Bet something that somebody wants to win," laughed one of the Rough Riders.

"All right," and he thrust his hand in his pocket and drew out a ten dollar gold piece. "Just cover that if you want to bet."

"Put up your money," said one of the others. "That chicken is gone for good, for what Nick Holmes gets his hands on never gets away from him. You don't know Nick, do you?"

"No," returned Yankee Doodle, "but I know that old Cuban, and I'll double the bet that if he doesn't give up the chicken his head will be split to his chin, or else cut off close to his shoulders."

"Wish I had the money to cover that bet," said one of the Rough Riders, "but I ain't got a cent."

In less than five minutes after he went in pursuit of Holmes the old Cuban returned with the chicken. The Rough Riders were astonished and several seemed to be a bit aghast.

"What did you do to him, Pedro?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"Took the chicken away from him," he answered.

"You didn't hurt him, did you?"

"I don't know, señor. I asked him for it and he laughed at me. Then I knocked him down, picked up the chicken and came away."

"You didn't machete him, did you?"

"No, señor."

Four or five of the Rough Riders went in search of Holmes, and found him sitting on the leaves about fifty yards away, gradually pulling himself together.

"What's the matter, Nick?" one of them asked.

"I've been hit by a Cuban cyclone."

"Anything broken?"

"Oh, I'm all broke up. Say, boys, if these blamed Cubans would fight the Spaniards as hard for freedom as they fight for a chicken there would have been no use of Uncle Sam's declaring war against Spain."

The boys laughed, pulled him to his feet and started to lead him back to Yankee Doodle's little camp.

"Excuse me, if you please," he said, "I don't care to go about that fellow any more, for he is the devil himself," and he refused to return, preferring to go back to his company.

One of them went with him, while the others returned and told Yankee Doodle that the fellow was all right.

"It won't do to monkey with Pedro," laughed Yankee Doodle. "If you'll all put in your rations with us, we'll cut up the chicken and divide with you."

They did so, and made a very pleasant party.

They had scarcely finished breakfast when the boom of artillery out on the left told them that the fight had opened again; but as no orders had come for the Rough Riders to take part in it, they remained where they were nearly an hour longer. Then orders came from Colonel Wood for them to again fall in for more hot work. Joe sprang up and went along with them.

"See here, Joe," said Yankee Doodle, "you'd better keep out of this thing to-day, for a sunstroke is as bad as a bullet."

"Oh, I'm all right," said Joe, "for I guess the fight will be more at a standstill to-day than it was yesterday."

"I don't know about that. I half suspect that we'll have to make a flank movement of several miles, and you can't stand that."

"I'll try it, anyhow," said the plucky little fellow; "I want to knock over one Spaniard, anyhow."

"Better go back, señor," said the old Cuban, shaking his head, "for when we get into the fight I will have no time to attend to you."

Still he refused to stay behind, and they ceased to urge him. Half an hour later the order to advance was given, and the Rough Riders marched through the deserted village of El Caney in the direction of the Spanish intrenchments a mile and a half away. After going about half the distance they reached an eminence from which they had a full view of the city, as well as three or four miles of the enemy's breastworks. They could see the enemy in position behind them and many Spanish flags waving above them all along the line. Looking over the housetops of the city they could see the Spanish fleet at anchor in the bay.

"By George, boys," said Yankee Doodle to his little party, "this is going to be the hottest fight yet. If we go at that line of intrenchments a thousand men will fall before we can reach it."

But they were halted there to await orders. But away out on the left down toward the coast the battle was raging furiously, and Sampson's fleet was hurling thunderbolts at the forts at the mouth of the harbor. The attack was being made on the extreme right of the Spanish lines against one of their strongholds at the village of Aguadores, within a short distance of Morro castle.

For more than two hours they stood there in line, listening to the roar of battle, while Spanish reinforcements were hurrying to the threatened point. At the end of that time the fire slackened, and the men expected an order to come for the whole line to move forward.

Presently cheering was heard away out on the left, which came rolling along up the line.

"That's good news," said Yankee Doodle; "I'll bet they licked the Spaniards down there."

He was right. The village of Aguadores had been car-

ried by storm and the Spaniards had fallen back behind their long line of intrenchments.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

When the news of the capture of Aguadores reached the Rough Riders the wildest cheering of the day followed, the daring fellows clamoring to be led at once to the assault; but, of course, that could not be done without orders from the general.

A long silence then followed, during which time the men remained in line, expecting every moment orders that would break the monotony of a long wait.

Along toward the end of the day the soldiers understood why they had not been ordered into battle. Shafter had sent, under a flag of truce, a demand for the surrender of the city, and was waiting for a reply from the Spanish general in command. It did not come until after dark. It was found to be a polite refusal to surrender.

Shafter then ordered the men to lie in line of battle all night, sleeping on their arms. Rations were brought to them, and the brave fellows ate where they were in the full belief that early on the following morning the decisive battle would be fought.

But when morning came they were again destined to lie quietly in full view of the Spanish position while waiting for orders.

During the morning a staff officer rode by to tell the men in line that Shafter was waiting for the women and children to be removed from the city in order to save them from the slaughter that was to follow. They then understood the delay, and knew that in due time they would be hurled against the formidable breastworks in fierce battle for the mastery of the city of Santiago.

Presently huge columns of smoke were seen issuing from the smokestacks of every ship in the Spanish fleet.

"Boys," said Yankee Doodle, as they stood gazing at the fleet through a field glass which he always carried with him, "they are getting up steam for a move of some kind;" and for more than an hour the men gazed with almost breathless interest at the splendid warships. Then they were seen to move, going straight down the bay in the direction of the mouth of the harbor.

"Whoop, boys!" cried Yankee Doodle, "they are going out to attack Sampson, and there'll be old Nick to pay out there in less than half an hour."

One by one the splendid ironclads steamed down through the narrow channel by the fortifications that lined it on either side, and in a little while they heard the roar of the great guns of Sampson's fleet.

Sampson himself with his flagship was away out east in the neighborhood of Guantanamo; but grim old Schley was out there waiting for them.

The roar of the great guns as the fight opened was terrific. The fight seemed to drift away westward, and now

and then were heard tremendous explosions, as one by one the warships were blown up by their own magazines. Away out along the coast the sullen boom of great guns was heard, as a running fight was carried on during the chase of one of the swiftest of Cervera's vessels.

Then the booming ceased altogether.

In the meantime the army remained facing the long line of the enemy's breastworks, waiting for orders to begin the assault. Hours passed, and then cheering was heard away out on the left again, as on the day before. It rolled along up the line, from left to centre, and from centre to right, every man seeming to try to out-yell his comrades.

Presently a staff officer was seen to dash up to where Colonels Wood and Roosevelt were standing and communicate something to them. Just a moment or two later Roosevelt threw up his hat, with a great cheer. Then he wheeled around, faced the Rough Riders and called out:

"Schley has sunk the whole Spanish fleet!"

Then pandemonium broke loose among the Rough Riders and the wildest scene of joyful excitement ever witnessed in a camp of armed men ensued. The cowboys from the wild West gave vent to war whoops. They seized each other around the waist, waltzing about over the rough ground, howling and yelling like wild lunatics. Not an officer interfered to check the excitement and disorder in the ranks.

Night came on, but the cheering never let up.

For the first time Yankee Doodle saw tears in the eyes of fierce old Pedro. The old man was utterly overcome with joy, and instead of shouting and yelling in concert with the Rough Riders, he quietly walked about with his machete clasped in his right hand, while a grim smile illumined his tear-stained face. As he passed Yankee Doodle the latter reached out his hand to him, saying:

"Pedro, the end is close at hand."

"Si, señor; I have but one regret, and that is that every man on board the ships did not go down with them. If your general will now give the order for us to charge I would gladly go forward and die on those breastworks out there, for I now know that Cuba will be free."

"Amigo," said Yankee Doodle, "you must live to enjoy the freedom of Cuba. Don't throw your life away recklessly, for Cuba will have need of all her brave sons when she takes her place among the nations of the earth. Keep cool, old man; keep cool."

"Sancti Marie, señor!" exclaimed the old patriot; "the time for a man to die is when he is happy in the knowledge of victory!"

"Very true, Amigo; but a man should not die as long as he is able to serve his country. There are other battles to be fought yet, and when the last victory is won those who fought for Cuba Libre must build up the waste places of this fair land until it blooms again like the Garden of Eden."

At that moment Moreland and Hawkins rushed up to the brave old Cuban, yelling:

"Cuba Libre! Cuba Libre!" at the top of their voices.

Quick as a flash the old patriot caught the wild spirit of their enthusiasm, and yelled even louder than they.

"Oh for a drum!" said Yankee Doodle. Then, wheeling around to Joe, asked:

"Where is your fife?"

"I've got it," said Joe, drawing it from its receptacle; "but it is no good without a drum."

"Let us have 'Yankee Doodle,' anyhow."

Joe placed the fife to his lips and the piercing notes caused every man to stop cheering; but the moment they caught the air of "Yankee Doodle" the Rough Riders broke loose again, and for full five minutes drowned every note of the fife.

Night came on, and again the men slept on their arms. Not an inch of ground would the Americans give. What they had gained they were determined to hold. Rations were brought to them, though rather late, and the hungry men feasted even while yelling and shouting over the destruction of the best fleet that Spain owned.

Old Pedro had disappeared soon after the sun went down, and was gone for a couple of hours, at the end of which time he suddenly presented himself to Yankee Doodle with a splendid drum and stick. He looked at the young American with a grim smile on his face, saying:

"Senor Americano, I want to hear you beat the drum again."

Yankee Doodle and Joe sprang to their feet, and in less than thirty seconds the roaring of the drum and the shrill notes of the fife awoke the echoes of the hills. Every Rough Rider who was not on post swarmed around them.

"Hail Columbia" and "The Star-Spangled Banner" rolled out over the hills, while every soldier who was listening bared his head under the starlight. But when the stirring notes of "Yankee Doodle" burst forth, every man yelled, whooped, howled and cheered to his heart's content. Even the officers stood around and shook hands right and left with the brave fellows. Rank seemed to have been forgotten in the wild joy of the moment, but not a soldier presumed to show any disrespect to an officer.

"If it was only daylight now," said Yankee Doodle, "I would beat the drum along the entire line."

"Let's do it, anyhow," said Joe.

"No; the way is too rough. We would stumble about so much the music would be spoiled; but we will do it tomorrow morning."

"Senor Yankee Doodle," said old Pedro, "I will lie down and sleep now as I have not slept in three years."

"That's right," exclaimed Hawkins, grasping the old fellow's hand; "sleep puts strength in a man's arm and courage in his soul."

Soon after the drum ceased, and perfect quiet seemed to fall upon the entire camp. The men had rolled in their blankets and were sleeping soundly. Early the next morning it was expected that the women and children, numbering many thousands, would leave the city for the surrounding hills to await the result of the great battle. Flags of truce passed between the lines several times. The foreign consuls were trying to persuade Shafter to give more time for the removal of non-combatants.

The general refused, suggesting to them that they persuade the Spaniards to surrender.

"They won't do it," replied one of the consuls, "as General Pando has arrived with six thousand fresh troops, which puts new life and hope into them."

"Do you know that Pando has reached the city?" Shafter asked.

"Yes; I have seen him myself."

"That means more prisoners for us," remarked the general; "only they will be harder to capture."

The destruction of the Spanish fleet naturally produced a change in the operations of the army, for now the American fleet could reduce the forts, enter the harbor and cover the city with their great guns.

The general at once sent an officer to the flagship of the American fleet, asking for a conference with Sampson in order to perfect a plan of operations for the capture of the entire Spanish army. Of course that meant delay, and the men all along the line, under orders of their officers, began throwing up intrenchments in order to hold the position against any sortie by the enemy.

"Joe," said Yankee Doodle to his fifer, "the fleet is going to come into the harbor, and you and I want to be on board and see the fun."

"Good!" exclaimed Joe. "We can see the whole business from the deck of the ship all along the hillsides."

"I'm going to ask the colonel to let us go," said Yankee Doodle, and he hurried away in search of Colonels Wood or Roosevelt.

As their names were not on the muster roll of the Rough Riders, permission was easily obtained, and they hastened away to the coast, down to Aguadores. When they reached there they found that Admiral Sampson had come ashore, and was then conferring with General Shafter in a house in the village.

"We can't go in there," said Yankee Doodle to Joe, "so we'll wait here until he comes out to return to the flagship. He will probably let us go on board with him."

"Of course he will," said Joe, "for there's nothing mean about the admiral."

They waited there several hours for the appearance of the admiral, and, much to their surprise, were joined by old Pedro.

"I was looking for you, Senor Yankee Doodle," said Pedro, "for I have news which you should at once give the general."

"What is it?" Yankee Doodle asked.

"A friend of mine left the city last night, escaping through the enemy's lines, who has given me a description of the building in which Senor Lieutenant Hobson and his men are confined as prisoners."

"Great Scott, Amigo!" exclaimed Yankee Doodle; "that's important news; for I know that the general is worried over the uncertainty of their location, fearing that some of our shells might fall where they are, and thus imperil their lives. What is the description of the building by which it can be known from the hills, as well as from the bay?"

"It is a large building, senor, on the south side of the city, and is one story higher than any other house south of the centre of the town; and on one corner of it is a little

square tower, which has been used by army officers for observation."

"That is clear enough," said Yankee Doodle; "I will see that the general gets the information just as soon as he is through with his conference with the admiral. If they let us do so we will go on board the flagship, in order to be in the fight when the fleet enters the harbor. If you will go with us, I will be glad to have you do so."

"No, señor, I don't wish to go."

"Why not?" he was asked.

"Because I cannot use my machete on board ship."

"Ah; you want to be in the fight, eh?"

"Sí, señor; I want to go in over those entrenchments when the army goes. I want to fight in the streets of Santiago de Cuba. I want to see the blood of Spain splash the cobblestones and sidewalks, which I cannot do if I am not there."

"You are right, Amigo; but keep cool, for the sake of Cuba, as other battles will yet have to be fought."

The old Cuban, after shaking hands with the two boys, started out again for a tramp over the hills back to the right wing of the army.

"Now, Joe," said Yankee Doodle, "I must get two sheets of paper and write down the statement given by Pedro, describing the location of Hobson and his comrades, one to be given to the general and the other to the admiral."

It took them some time to find paper and ink, but they finally succeeded in doing so. A statement was soon writ-

ten out, and a copy of it made, after which Yankee Doodle and Joe repaired to the house where the general and admiral were conferring.

Pretty soon the two distinguished leaders came out. The admiral was about to leave to return to his ship. Yankee Doodle rushed up to them and handed a paper to each.

"Hello!" said the admiral on recognizing him; "glad to see you, my boy."

"Thank you, Admiral; I came here to see you. I want to go on board with you."

"You may do so; we would be glad to have you. But what is this?" and he turned to the piece of paper and read it.

"Ah, my boy, this is one of the many good deeds you have performed for the service. It takes a great load of anxiety off my mind."

"So it does with me," said the general; "for it may be the saving of the lives of those brave fellows. I thank you in the name of the whole army," and the general extended his hand to both the boys, shaking them warmly.

"Now come with me, my boys," said the admiral, leading the way down to where the boat was waiting for them.

Joe and Yankee Doodle followed, and were soon on board the admiral's flagship, where we will leave them patiently waiting for the great, desperate undertaking that was about to occur.

THE END.

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